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# **Exercise During Pregnancy**



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*Exercising regularly during your pregnancy can benefit both the mother and child.*

*While most people have the notion that during pregnancy they ought to relax and avoid doing a lot of physical activities, science has proven that exercise during pregnancy benefits you in more ways than possible. it can reduce the risk of certain complications and also help you with body aches! If you're worried about the excess weight gained during pregnancy, then this is one way to keep that in check as well.*

*It's a myth that exercising increases the risk of miscarriages, premature births, or birth defects.*

## **Is it safe to exercise during pregnancy?**

YES! Exercising in moderation and practicing moves that are baby-friendly are entirely safe.

However, over-stressing your body with excessive exercise results in fatigue and causes your body to strain to push blood around the body organs.

To avoid pushing yourself too hard, consider talking to a fitness instructor and a doctor before delving into it.



# What are the benefits of exercising during pregnancy?

Exercising will relieve any kind of stress, anxiety, or depression that you have during your pregnancy.

- It will help counter backaches, body aches, and other common pregnancy discomforts like constipation or cramps.
- Regular exercise can reduce or almost eliminate the chances of high blood glucose or high blood pressure in case the mother develops gestational diabetes or preeclampsia.
- It helps with a healthy delivery and improves your endurance during labor pains.
- Moderately intensive exercises can help you avoid gaining excessive weight and regain your strength and physical body faster post-delivery.
- It fosters proper blood circulation throughout the body, boosting your energy levels and making you feel fitter during pregnancy.
- Babies of mothers who regularly exercised during pregnancy develop greater motor skills.



## When to avoid exercising during pregnancy?

If you have health conditions like gestational diabetes, high BP, or asthma, your doctor might tell you to avoid exercising. Any form of exercising must be approved by your doctor, and for mothers with other problems, they might suggest alternatives. If you feel unusually exhausted, experience nausea, or have immense body aches, stop exercising. Other severe problems that may rarely occur include vaginal bleeding, pelvic pain, inflammation or swelling, excessive breathlessness, and irregular palpitations. Your doctor will guide you in such cases.

## What kind of exercises can you do and how intensive can they be?

- **Prenatal exercise classes:** A trained professional will guide you through exercises and modify them based on your pace and level of activity. These classes are also a great way to communicate and discuss common problems with your fellow to-be moms!
- **Pilates:** This is a low impact form of exercise and aids in flexibility, endurance, and strengthening. It also helps with back pain that could be caused due to the growing belly. Specific kegel exercises can also help in the natural delivery process.

- **Yoga:** For peace and serenity, do yoga. It enhances breathing, blood flow and strengthens your core muscles. Avoid doing intensive asanas towards the end of your pregnancy.
- **Water aerobics:** It helps keep your body cool while also making you feel lighter in water. It is recommended mainly in the third trimester of pregnancy. Be careful of mishaps like drowning or slipping to avoid further complications.
- **Light cardio:** Using the treadmill or elliptical trainer are both safe options. Avoid heavy running and adhere to brisk walking for at least 30 mins.
- Avoid abs training, major muscle building exercises, or weight lifting as excessive pressure on your core or pelvis can make you feel nauseous and cause considerable discomfort to the body, variably reducing your blood flow.
- Avoid doing exercises that require you to lay on your back. This can cause pressure on your blood vessels and compromise blood flow to the baby.
- Avoid paragliding or scuba diving. It can lead to the formation of harmful bubbles of gas in your baby's body, also known as **decompression sickness.**

**Exercise for about 2 to 2.5 hours.  
Don't do it all at once.  
Spread it throughout the day.**

# When can you start working out during pregnancy?

**First trimester:** You can do most of the pre-pregnancy exercises as you are used to. You can start your prenatal exercise classes and build a routine.

**Second trimester:** Reduce the intensity of cardiovascular exercises. Don't do exercises that require you to lay on your back or turn upside-down. Continue brisk walking and moderately intensive exercises.

**Third trimester:** Continue Cardio but at a much lighter intensity and pace than in the second trimester. Try doing more stretching and relaxing asanas to prepare your body for the birthing process. Water aerobics is great for this time period as it eases any possible stress on the joints and makes you feel weightless underwater. Weight lifting is a strict no-no!



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Please contact your doctor for more details.