

Exercise During Pregnancy

What are the benefits of exercise during pregnancy?

Regular exercise during pregnancy has benefits for you and your baby. Exercise may:

- Reduce back pain
- Decrease your risk of having a cesarean delivery (c-section), gestational diabetes, and preeclampsia [pree-i-KLAMP-see-uh]
- Strengthen your heart and blood vessels
- Reduce constipation
- Help you gain weight healthily during pregnancy and lose baby weight after delivery

Is exercise safe during pregnancy?

It is safe to begin or continue most kinds of exercise if you have a normal pregnancy and are healthy. Talk with your healthcare provider early in your pregnancy to make sure exercise is safe for you and your baby. You and your provider can discuss appropriate exercises that are safe and that meet your needs.

Exercise is considered unsafe if you have any of these conditions or pregnancy-related problems:

- Certain kinds of heart and lung problems.
- Preeclampsia or high blood pressure.
- Preterm labor (labor before 37 weeks of pregnancy), or after your water has broken.
- Certain cervical problems.
- Placenta previa after 26 weeks of pregnancy. This means your placenta is very low in the uterus, which may block the uterus opening.
- A pregnancy with twins or triplets (or more) with a greater risk for preterm labor.
- Severe anemia [uh-NEE-mee-uh]. This means your blood doesn't carry enough oxygen to the rest of your body.



What do I need to do next?

- 1 Review this fact sheet.
- 2 Write down any questions you have on [page 2](#) of this handout.
- 3 Decide what types of physical activities meet your needs.
- 4 Discuss your exercise plan, goals, and questions with your healthcare provider.

How much exercise should I get?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend getting at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity each week during pregnancy. This type of activity should include moving your larger muscles in a rhythmic way (like brisk walking, swimming, and general work around the home).

Starting a new exercise program

If you are beginning a new exercise program, start it slowly and gradually increase your physical activity. You can start with just 5 minutes a day and add 5 minutes each week until you are able to remain active for 30 minutes during the day.

Continuing an exercise program

If you had a lot of physical activity before your pregnancy, you may be able to keep doing the same workouts with your healthcare provider's approval. Be sure to increase the number of healthy calories you eat if you start to lose weight.

