

Physical activity during pregnancy

Exercise during pregnancy can offer to pregnant women many benefits such as: reducing the risk of pre-eclampsia, avoiding excessive gestational weight gain, reducing the risk of gestational diabetes, improving mood, and helping sleep. It also helps reduce backaches, constipation, and bloating. For these reasons, it is recommended that you maintain or increase your physical activity. A pregnant woman who doesn't usually exercise can begin with as little as 10 minutes of physical activity daily up to at least 30 minutes. In contrast, the pregnant woman who was physically active on a regular basis can probably continue to exercise at the same level, if she feels comfortable and has the approval of her OB/GYN. The body during pregnancy goes through many changes, for this reason, it is important to choose exercises that consider the following:

- **Joints:** Hormones produced during pregnancy cause that the ligaments in the joints to get relaxed. This makes the joints more movable and at risk of injury.
- **Balance:** The extra weight in the front makes the pregnant woman less stable and more likely to lose her balance, and therefore be at greater risk of falling.
- **Breathing:** The need for oxygen increases during pregnancy. This can affect your ability to do arduous exercise, especially if you are overweight or obese.

It is important that, before exercising, you include warm-up movements, do your routine and once it is over, stretch again and cool down the body. Some examples of safe exercises to do during pregnancy are:



Squats:

- Squats are good for strengthening your legs and opening your pelvis at the same time. You can usually do it with your back straight against the wall and use a chair as a backrest to prevent falls.



Kegel exercises:

- Help strengthen the pelvic floor muscles, and reinforce the muscles that support the abdominal organs, including the uterus, vagina, bowel, and bladder.



Walking or jogging:

- Walking on a flat surface will be beneficial while being as a low-impact exercise.



Swimming and water aerobics:

- Swimming and water aerobics are low-impact exercises that can help keep your body toned and don't present a risk of falling.

Important: Before starting an exercise program, check with your OB/GYN.



Prenatal Yoga:

It helps control breathing, build up and strengthening the entire pelvic area. You should avoid complicated postures or those that compress the abdominal area.



Prenatal Pilates:

Can improve your trunk or torso strength and body balance, which reduces the chance of falling. Also, can help reduce lower back pain associated with weight gain.



Dance without acrobatics:

Dancing during pregnancy, with gentle pelvic movements, is a very good preparation for childbirth.

Pregnant women should avoid high-impact exercises, high-risk falls, high-intensity exercises that provoke force and high pressure on the pelvis and trunk, or that increase temperature. Signs you should consider stopping exercising during pregnancy:

- Vaginal bleeding, Abdominal pain
- Regular painful contractions
- Leakage of amniotic fluid
- Dizziness
- Chest pain
- Muscular weakness

Exercising after childbirth can help improve your mood and lower your risk of deep vein thrombosis. However, it is important to give your body contract back to recover after a vaginal delivery or cesarean section, and to wait until your obstetrician clears you to start exercising.

Social and Emotional Aspect

For tips, tools, and resources on how you and your family can manage any emotional and physical concerns that may come up during pregnancy, please visit your primary care physician (PCP) or contact the following phone lines:

Medical Advice Line

1-844-347-7801

TTY/TDD 1-844-347-7804

APS Healthcare

787-641-9133

References:

<https://www.clinicaalemana.cl/maternidad-y-familia/actividad-fisica-en-el-embarazo> . <https://www.mayoclinic.org/es-es/healthy-lifestyle/pregnancy-week-by-week/indepth/pregnancy-and-exercise/art-20046896> . <https://www.enfamil.es/blogs/mi-embarazo/ejercicios-para-embarazadas-por-trimestres> . <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/es/ejercicios-del-primer-trimestreembarazo#beneficios> . <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/es/ejercicios-del-primer-trimestreembarazo#resumen> . http://www.fasgo.org.ar/images/Actividad_fisica_y_ejercicio_durante_el_embarazo_y_el_posparto.pdf . <https://www.acog.org/womens-health/faqs/exercise-during-pregnancy> .

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