



Innate Start Midwifery

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Exercise in Pregnancy

Exercise is an essential component in leading a healthy life. This is especially important during pregnancy. Exercise improves circulation, strengthens the immune system, increases oxygenation of the body, strengthens heart function, strengthens muscles, increases endurance and lifts the mood. As your body grows, carries and develops your baby, regular exercise will help energize and strengthen you, preparing you for the hard work of labor and delivering your baby. The more fit you are, the easier this will be to accomplish and the faster you will recover in the postpartum period. Below are some points to keep in mind in order to receive all of the benefits of exercise without any complications.

Avoid

- Lying flat on your back or abdominal exercises after 12 weeks
- Exercising to the point of out of breath or exhaustion
- No severe twisting through the torso - this creates torsion in the uterus and can contribute to malposition of the baby
- No quick, jerky movements - this strains the ligaments which are already under greater stress during later months of pregnancy

Do

- Continue your pre-pregnancy exercise routine as long as it does not include the above mentioned things to avoid
- Walk often and briskly or for as long as is comfortable. Include stairs if it doesn't aggravate joints. This is the best to start with if exercise has not been part of your normal life routine prior to pregnancy
- Prenatal yoga or pilates
- Gentle stretching
- Do squatting exercises every day whenever possible

**If you experience any pain during exercise, stop and consult with your midwife and/or chiropractor prior to beginning again.