

Exercise For all pregnant women

1. No exercise should be performed in the supine (lying flat on your back) position after 16 weeks of gestation is completed.
2. Exercises that employ the Valsalva maneuver (abdominal straining) should be avoided.
3. Maternal core temperature should not exceed 100.4 deg F during exercise.
4. High impact activities should be avoided after 12 weeks.
5. You should not engage in downhill skiing, scuba diving, contact sports, competitive tennis, hot yoga.
6. Relatively low weights with multiple repetitions lifted through a dynamic range of motion appear to be a safe and effective type of resistance exercise during pregnancy.

For women who have not regularly exercised prior to pregnancy :

1. Start short and easy with 5 to 10 minute sessions, and work up to exercising at moderate exertion (like brisk walking) for 30 minutes, 4-5 times per week. Remember, any amount of exercise, even a 15 minute session, is beneficial.
2. Maternal heart rate should not exceed 140 beats per minute. You should be able to talk normally while exercising.
3. Walking, swimming, spinning, elliptical workouts and prenatal exercise classes are all great.

For women who have regularly exercised vigorously prior to pregnancy:

1. In general, any exercise you have routinely been doing is OK to continue through about 12 weeks.
2. Perceived exertion should decrease during pregnancy. A combination of moderate and vigorous exercise is ideal. During moderate exercise (defined as 3-4 metabolic equivalents) you should be able to easily carry on a conversation. During vigorous exercise (6-7 METS), it may be difficult to easily converse.
3. While exercising, breaks should be taken every 20-30 minutes for cardiac recovery, hydration, and stretching.
4. No exercise session should include more than 60 minutes total of vigorous exercise.
5. Repetitive isometric or heavy resistance weight-lifting, and any exercises that result in a marked pressor effect during pregnancy should be avoided.
6. Caloric intake should be adequate to meet not only the extra energy needs of pregnancy but also of the exercise performed.