

Moving through Pregnancy: A Guide for Physical Activity

Exercise is healthy for most low-risk pregnant women and their babies.
Before you begin to exercise, talk with your health care provider.

Things all pregnant women need to know about exercise:

- ☀️ Make sure you are drinking enough water—drink so that you are not thirsty.
- ☀️ Be sure you are eating the right amount of food to fuel your exercise.
- ☀️ If you are getting overheated, dizzy, or exhausted while exercising, slow down and rest before continuing.
- ☀️ Wear a supportive bra, especially as your breasts change throughout pregnancy.
- ☀️ Always avoid contact sports (football, ice hockey), sports where you have a high risk of falling (horseback riding, downhill skiing, gymnastics), and scuba diving or exercise at high altitudes. These can harm your baby.

1st Trimester

If you have been exercising before you were pregnant:

- ☀️ Continue your exercise activities as long as you are comfortable.

If you have not been exercising before you were pregnant:

- ☀️ You can begin to exercise: Start slowly and gradually work up to 30 minutes most days of the week.
- ☀️ Begin with low-impact activities like walking, swimming, bicycling, or strength/conditioning. If you use a bicycle, wear a helmet.

2nd and 3rd Trimester

- ☀️ If you were exercising before this time, you can continue exercising as long as you are comfortable.
- ☀️ See above for how to start an exercise routine if you have not been exercising.
- ☀️ It is important to avoid lying flat on your back. If you would normally lie on your back, place a pillow or wedge under your right hip. It will improve the blood flow to your baby.
- ☀️ As your baby grows, it may be easy for you to lose your balance. Use caution. Pay attention to how your body feels when you move.
- ☀️ Keep anything you lift close to your body. When lifting, keep your feet shoulder-width apart with a slight bend in your knees.
- ☀️ When you bend down, keep your back straight while bending your knees. Let your legs do the work of standing up, instead of your lower back.
- ☀️ Think about stretching/strengthening exercises that will prepare your body for labor and that will increase your comfort as your body changes:
 - ☀️ pelvic tilts
 - ☀️ squats
 - ☀️ side stretches
 - ☀️ Kegel exercises

Warning Signs

Stop exercising and call your health care provider right away if you have:

- ☀️ Abdominal pain
- ☀️ Contractions
- ☀️ Leaking of fluid
- ☀️ Bleeding
- ☀️ Severe headache that doesn't go away

