

# Pregnancy Fitness Tips

Gail Buckley

[www.PLRContentSource.com](http://www.PLRContentSource.com)

While weight gain is a natural and healthy part of pregnancy, it's not a time to totally neglect your fitness. The more fit you are before and during your pregnancy, the healthier both you and your baby will be – and the easier time you'll have getting your pre-pregnancy body back.

And even though it's important to stay fit, it's also important to make sure your exercise program is safe for your changing body. You may not be able to do the same things you did before getting pregnant.

## **The Benefits of Staying Fit During Pregnancy**

Why is it so important to think about fitness while you're pregnant? There are many reasons why being fit is critical to your health and that of your baby. You'll be able to enjoy your pregnancy much more if you stay in the best shape possible.

One benefit of staying fit is having an improved mood. You'll be combating changes in your hormone levels that can affect your mood and being fit will help to counteract those mood swings.

You'll also enjoy better sleep during your pregnancy. Sleep is your body's opportunity to become refreshed from the day and to heal and restore your body – and your baby's growing body depends on your ability to sleep well, also.

Pregnancy is often fraught with aches and pains as your body changes and your weight becomes redistributed. Being in great shape will help to combat those aches and pains and allow you to be more comfortable throughout your pregnancy.

Exercise will help you not to gain more weight than is necessary during your pregnancy. It also helps your blood pressure and blood sugar to remain steady even though growing your baby does put stress on your body.

Finally, when you're in good shape, you'll be more prepared for the stress and strain of labor and delivery. You'll have more strength and endurance to make it through this critical time and to recover after you deliver.

### **Start Your Fitness Program Before You Get Pregnant**

The best time to begin trying to get fit is before you're actually pregnant. You should get as close to your ideal weight as possible before you conceive if possible. While not everyone gets pregnant after a planning process, many women do.

If you know that you want to get pregnant in the near future, start your fitness program now. Being in your best shape will actually make it easier to conceive and help you to stay at a healthy weight once you do get pregnant.

A healthy fitness routine combines aerobic activity, strength training, and flexibility exercises. You should talk with your healthcare provider before beginning a fitness routine to make sure you're doing exercises that are safe for you.

While it may seem frustrating to wait to get pregnant until you've improved your physical fitness, you'll be glad you did once you experience the changes pregnancy brings to your body.

If you're starting your pregnancy and you're already overweight or not in good shape, pregnancy isn't the time to try to actively lose weight. You shouldn't go on a diet or start a heavy-duty exercise program if you're out of shape.

But that doesn't mean you can't exercise, but you just need to have realistic expectations about what you're doing. You should also start slow and stick with exercises that are very low impact such as walking.

### **Get Aerobic Activity During Your Pregnancy**

It's critical to participate in aerobic exercise that helps you to keep your heart strong and burn excess fat. There are several activities you can perform during your pregnancy that are generally considered safe for you at this time.

Aerobic activity should be performed in such a way that it doesn't put too much pressure on your joints. You should also make sure to keep your heart from beating too fast – and you should talk with your doctor about an appropriate heart rate during exercise.

One of the best exercises you can participate in while pregnant is walking. This is a great low impact activity that can be done at just about any fitness level. How far and how fast you walk will depend on your own fitness level.

Walking can be done just about anywhere and doesn't require you to spend a lot of money by buying special equipment. All you need is a good pair of tennis shoes and you're ready to go.

If you're looking for aerobic exercise that has even less impact on your joints, swimming and water exercise are great choices. When you're in the water, you only weight 1/12th of your actual body weight.

As you move through the water, you won't be putting any stress on joints. Swimming and walking across a shallow pool give you a great workout using water as the resistance. It can also provide you with some relief from the extra weight you're carrying.

Biking may be appropriate if you're comfortable with it and if your doctor approves it for you. You may also enjoy activities such as dancing as long as you avoid activities that could cause you to fall or get injured.

You may want to participate in low impact aerobics. Those are generally okay as long as you watch out for activities that can throw you off balance. As your abdomen grows with the new baby, your center of gravity will change and it becomes easier to fall.

Running may be okay if you're already a seasoned runner, but if you aren't a runner pregnancy isn't the time to start. Talk with your doctor about what exercises are appropriate for you given your current routine.

## **Strengthen Your Muscles**

During your pregnancy you need to continue keeping your muscles strong. In particular, it helps to have upper body strength to prepare you for life with a newborn baby.

Exercises for your biceps, triceps, and upper back are particularly helpful. You can use free weights, weight machines, or resistance bands. You shouldn't lift weights that are too heavy for you. If you can't lift the weight comfortably, you shouldn't lift it.

When lying on your side, leg lifts are a great way to use your body's own weight to gain strength. Squats can also help you to gain strength in your thighs and buttocks. You should also perform pelvic tilts to help prepare your body for the extra weight your pelvis will be carrying.

It's important to make sure that any exercises you perform are approved by your doctor. You'll want to stay away from any exercises that put strain on your joints or muscles and could cause injury.

## **Add Flexibility to Your Pregnancy Exercise Routine**

While many people focus on strength training and cardiovascular activity, flexibility sometimes gets left behind. But this is just as important for your health as other activities that keep you fit.

You may find that yoga is a great activity for you as you prepare for your child to be born. You can take yoga classes or look for a pregnancy yoga video that will show you the proper techniques. You'll have to modify exercises for pregnancy.

Each day you should participate in a routine of stretching to help your body combat some of the stress of pregnancy weight gain. Stretching your back, arms, legs, neck, and shoulders will be beneficial for you.

Shoulder circles where you move your shoulders forward and back a few times will help to release some of your tension. Stretching your chest muscles by holding your arms up and pushing them back.

Stretching our calves is also important. You can do this by leaning on the wall or a countertop and extending your leg backward, you'll feel a stretch in your calf muscles that can bring some relief.

Breathing deeply can also help you to feel relaxed and allow muscles to rest. Breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth slowly will help you to feel refreshed and restored.

### **Exercises to Avoid During Pregnancy**

Once you get past the first trimester, your body won't be able to do all of the same exercises that you could do before. For example, doctors usually recommend that in the second and third trimesters you don't do any exercises where you have to lie on your back.

That means abdominal exercises such as sit ups and crunches are out for a few months. Stick with other moves that don't put that much strain on your core muscles while you're pregnant.

Exercises that cause you to put a lot of pressure on your joints are also not recommended. You don't want to be jarred or bounce while pregnant. Jumping and changing directions quickly are also not recommended.

As you get further along in your pregnancy, you'll notice that your joints become looser. This is because your body produces a chemical that is designed to help your pubic bone get looser for delivery of the baby.

When your baby is getting bigger, you'll notice that you don't feel as much balance as you normally do. It's important, then, to make sure you avoid exercises that might cause you to trip or fall.

You should also avoid any type of sport that might cause you to come into contact with people and equipment. It's also not a good idea to participate in adventurous activities such as downhill skiing, which can put you at a great risk for injury.

No matter what exercise you're performing, it's always important to listen to your body. If you feel good while you're doing it, you're probably going to be okay.

But if you feel dizzy or become short of breath, you'll want to stop what you're doing and avoid it in the future.

If you experience any type of pain, you should also stop what you're doing. There are serious warning signs you should also watch out for such as:

- Vaginal bleeding
- Contractions
- Fluid leaking from the vagina
- Chest pain

These are signs you should immediately stop what you're doing and call your healthcare provider. Always pay attention to the way your body feels and the signs it gives you.

### **Resources for Pregnancy Fitness**

When you decide that you want to have a pregnancy that includes physical fitness, it helps to have some resources to get you started. There are many ways you can learn more about proper exercises.

Your local gym or community center may offer pregnancy fitness classes that will help you to stay in shape safely. Pregnancy aerobics, yoga, and strength training are offered at many facilities around the world.

There are also many instructional videos that will help you to exercise safely during pregnancy. A quick online search will lead you to exercise videos specifically designed for different stages of your pregnancy.

There are also in-depth books and guides on pregnancy fitness that can give you step by step exercises to perform during pregnancy. You'll find many selections available through online booksellers.

You may also find help with websites that give helpful information and resources for women who are trying to conceive or are already pregnant.

In most cases, exercise is going to be a great choice for you during your pregnancy. Exercise will help you to have a healthier pregnancy, easier delivery, and faster recovery after you give birth.

You should always talk with your healthcare provider before beginning an exercise program. While exercise is usually beneficial, there could be personal circumstances that would make it inadvisable for you. You should also listen to your own body and avoid any activity that doesn't feel good to you.



## **PLR CONTENT SOURCE**

Your Source For High Quality, Private Label Rights  
Content That You Can Actually Afford and Profit From

[www.PLRContentSource.com](http://www.PLRContentSource.com)