

Exercising in pregnancy

Pregnant women should get at least **2.5-5 hours of moderate-intensity activities every week**.

This can be in the form of aerobic, stretching or muscle resistance exercises.

Exercise in pregnancy has been shown to reduce medical complications in pregnancy, including hypertension (high blood pressure) and excessive weight gain in pregnancy.



Aerobic exercises

Aerobic exercises involve continuous activities that use large muscle groups and elevates the heart rate and breathing. Some examples of aerobic exercises include:

Brisk walking | Stationary cycling | Swimming



Stretching exercises

Slow and controlled stretches (i.e.: yoga) can be incorporated as part of warm up or exercise routine



Muscle resistance exercises

Strengthening exercises should be performed twice per week, on non-consecutive days, covering the main muscle groups of the body. Resistance can be provided by light weights, body weight or elasticised resistance-bands.

Aim to perform 1 to 2 sets of 12 to 15 repetitions for each exercise. These strengthening exercises should be performed with slow and steady movements and proper breathing technique (i.e.: exhale on exertion).

Avoid heavy weight-lifting and activities that involve straining or holding the breath. Exercises should not be performed lying flat on the back after the first trimester and walking lunges are best avoided to prevent injury to the pelvic connective tissue.

If you are new to exercise, start out slowly and gradually increase your activity. Begin with as little as 5 minutes a day. Add 5 minutes each week until you can stay active for 30 minutes a day.

Warning signs to stop physical activity

If you experience chest pain, persistent shortness of breath, severe headache, persistent dizziness, painful uterine contractions, or vaginal bleeding during physical activity, be sure to stop and seek immediate medical attention. Check the appropriateness of your physical activity with your doctor if you develop new medical issues in your pregnancy.