

PHYSICIAN CLEARANCE-

Indeed many doctors will advocate an exercise program to help maintain a healthy weight, prevent the onset of diabetes, ect. However your doctor is the expert and it is absolutely essential to always receive medical clearance before you begin any program. Remember each pregnancy is unique (regardless of how many children you have) and in some cases there may be restrictions or modifications needed to ensure a healthy delivery.

Please consult your Personal Trainer to ensure safe body mechanics and modifications if your doctor has placed any restrictions. A Fitness Professional will ensure you are safe with kinesthetic movements and develop a plan suited to your doctor's recommendations.

The following guidelines are for the woman who has been given medical clearance with no restrictions.

PREGNANCY CARDIOVASCULAR-

There is one universal rule to follow: do not stop or switch your normal exercise routine (unless there is potential for impact); and also this is not the time to strenuously cross train.

Let me explain further. If you are a runner it is not necessary for you to stop running as long as the heart rate is safely monitored. The *potential for impact* includes sports such as surfing, ice skating, skiing, ect. These activities due to their nature have the potential for impact which could harm the developing baby. To be safe stop these high risk activities until after your pregnancy.

Avoid *strenuous cross training* implies that this is not the time to drastically alter or switch your routine from one sport to the next. So if you are a runner pregnancy is not the ideal time for you to stop running and begin a Boot Camp or strenuously cross train for a new sport. Be patient with yourself. Pregnancy is a delicate time in your life where safety and caution will ensure a healthy delivery.

Monitor your heart rate during and after exercise. A pulse more than 100 beats per minute five minutes after a workout means you have worked your body too hard. Again this is a delicate time where safety of your baby takes priority over everything else. Do not at any time take the heart rate to a strenuous level, on a scale of 1-10 aim to stay within a 6-7 range. Pregnancy is not the time for strenuous cardio workout. The fetus cannot get rid of excessive heat, so also use caution and avoid exercising in hot environments.

STRENGTH TRAINING

The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists suggests working up to 30 minutes of moderate exercise most days of the week, but you should start with what you can handle and gradually add time to your workouts each week. In regards to weight lifting and resistance training:

*Use lighter weights and avoid doing "failure" training. Failure training is the point at which your muscles are worked so hard they literally "fail" and cannot complete the repetition of the performed exercise. Keep your weight and resistance training within the medium range; not your heaviest weight possible and yet not to light to still get the benefit of the exercise.

*Monitor your form more carefully, since your center of gravity shifts and may compromise your balance. You'll need to pay attention to your posture and use good form and technique to avoid back pain or injury.

*As the pregnancy progresses avoid strenuous lifting and weight training with the middle and lower back muscles. These muscles will already be overworked due to the weight of your baby being carried anterior (to the front) of your body. In place of heavy lifting with the back use this time to stretch the lower and middle back muscles to minimize pain and prevent the possibility of injury.

*Avoid supine positions (on your back) like bench presses or crunches after the first trimester. As the weight of your baby develops there will be a point when your doctor advocates to no longer sleep on your back. At this point it will no longer be safe for you to continue exercises on your back either. This has nothing to do with the mother's athletic ability- IT IS A SAFETY ISSUE. The weight of the baby in this position can potentially cut off blood circulation to the lower extremities which can be harmful to mother and baby- SO DON'T DO IT! It is a dangerous and UNECESSARY RISK.

*In your third trimester it is recommended to avoid positions which MOVE THE FETUS for fear of moving your baby into a breech position. If there is any confusion regarding these unsafe movements I would highly recommend consulting a Personal Trainer or Fitness Professional with the expertise and knowledge of Pregnancy & Exercise.

BELOW IS YOUR SAFE PREGNANCY EXERCISE PLAN WHICH STRENGTHENS ALL THE MAJOR MUSCLE GROUPS STILL KEEPING BABY SAFE FROM BREECH INCLUDING STRETCHES FOR THE MIDDLE AND LOWER BACK. GOOD LUCK & CONGRATULATIONS!

1) Modified Pushups- Mix it up! Other safe chest alternatives which can be done throughout your entire pregnancy include your seated Chest Fly and Chest Press machines, Incline Bench Presses with the bench at a 45 degree angle.



1-2nd trimester



3rd trimester supported wall push ups

2) Planks- Press the forearms and hands firmly down, do not let your chest sink, press back through the heels. Keep the neck in line with the spine and broaden the shoulder blades.



3) WALL SITS- A safe lower body exercise which can be continued throughout the entire pregnancy. Mix it up! Use a stability ball against the wall with upper body movements such as bicep curls and shoulder presses. Emphasize 80% of your body weight through the heel of the foot as you squat up & down.



4) CAT & COW YOGA STRETCH- An old Yoga practice which is still used today to stretch tired back muscles and move the baby out of breech into a safe position for a healthy delivery. This stretch can be continued throughout your entire pregnancy.

