



MELBOURNE

**Pregnancy &
Pelvic Physio**



All healthy pregnant women should participate in exercise during their pregnancy to maintain their physical fitness and maintain a healthy lifestyle. Unfortunately most women do not meet the daily recommended amount of exercise, despite the significant benefits.

Research shows there is **no known** increase in adverse pregnancy or neonatal outcomes in women who exercise safely throughout their pregnancy.

The benefits of exercise:

- Reduces fatigue
- Reduces swelling in the limbs
- Reduces stress, anxiety and depression
- Can reduce varicosities
- Can help to prevent gestational diabetes
- Can improve sugar levels in women who have gestational diabetes.

How much exercise?

- 150 to 300 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity each week, or alternatively, 75 to 150 minutes of vigorous exercise, or some combination of the two.
- 30-45 minutes on most days of the week
- If you do not usually exercise; begin with 15 minutes, 3 times a week and gradually increase.

What exercise is recommended?

A combination of strength and aerobic (cardio) exercise is recommended.



Exercise in Pregnancy

During pregnancy low impact exercise and light weights are preferred.

This can include:

- Walking
- Swimming
- Stationary bike
- Cross Trainer
- Pre natal Pilates or Yoga
- Aquatic exercise
- Pregnancy exercise class

How hard should you work?

- Moderate to somewhat hard.
- You should always be able to comfortably talk while exercising.

Women are encouraged to complete pre-exercise screening to ensure safety and to be given specific advice on an appropriate exercise regime for their own situation.

Medical Clearance:

Women experiencing medical and obstetric issues such as persistent bleeding, placenta praevia, pre-eclampsia, pregnancy-induced hypertension and indicators of increased risk of premature labour (multiple pregnancy, ruptured membranes, premature contractions or shortened cervical length) should discuss their exercise program with an obstetric care provider.

When to stop:

Warning signs to stop exercise and seek medical attention include;

- chest pain
- unexplained shortness of breath
- dizziness, feeling faint or headache
 - muscle weakness
 - calf pain, swelling or redness
- sudden swelling of the ankles, hands or face
- vaginal bleeding or amniotic fluid loss
 - decreased fetal movement
 - uterine contractions or pain in the lower back, pelvic area or abdomen (potentially indicating pre-term labour)