



# EXERCISE DURING PREGNANCY

All pregnant women without complications are encouraged to participate in regular exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle.

## Benefits of exercise

When you are pregnant the benefits of exercise include:

- Improved physical and mental well-being.
- Helps to prevent excessive weight gain.
- Reduces the risk of pregnancy-related complications such as gestational diabetes, pre-eclampsia and hypertension.

If you do little or no exercise, start with walking or swimming and gradually increase the duration and frequency of your activity.

Recommendations are to build up to 150 minutes per week or 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity on most days. Use the 'talk test' as a way to check the level of intensity, that is, aim to exercise at a comfortable level at which you are able to maintain a conversation.

## Safe exercises to do during pregnancy

- Brisk walking
- Jogging
- Swimming
- Cycling on a stationary bike
- Low impact aerobic exercise or 'pump' weight classes (let the teacher know you are pregnant)
- Water-based exercise such as aquaerobics
- Prenatal yoga or pilates

## Precautions for exercise in pregnancy

There are some exercises that involve positions and movements that may be uncomfortable or harmful for pregnant women. Speak to your doctor or physiotherapist if you are unsure.

In general, you should avoid:

- raising your body temperature too high
- lifting heavy weights; choose low weights and medium to high repetitions
- exercising to the point of exhaustion or if you are unwell; listen to your body!

## For more information

Better Health Channel  
[www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/pregnancy-and-exercise](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/pregnancy-and-exercise)

Sports Medicine Australia  
[sma.org.au/resources-advice/policies-and-guidelines/active-women-in-sport/](http://sma.org.au/resources-advice/policies-and-guidelines/active-women-in-sport/)