Exercising During the First Trimester and Second Trimester

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Medical experts all agree that taking some regular exercise helps women have an easier pregnancy and cope with the rigours of giving birth.

A women who is fit before she conceives and continues to do some suitable exercise during pregnancy is also more likely to get back into shape quickly after the birth and have the energy she needs to cope with looking after a new baby.

If you already follow an exercise routine your GP is likely to encourage you to continue with it throughout your first trimester and second trimester and even beyond, but with certain modifications.

Now is not the time to try something new, or partake in a vigorous sport or exercise regime if you have not done so before.

Try instead to find something moderate that you enjoy doing and build it into your weekly routine.

Suitable exercises for the first trimester and second trimester

Always check with your doctor before starting any new form of exercise. If you are continuing with your usual exercise programme, be prepared to cut down on the time and intensity as your pregnancy advances.

If you are exercising in a group always let the instructor know you are pregnant. If you are on your own, stop if any activity makes you feel at all dizzy.

Activities that are excellent during pregnancy include swimming, walking, stationary cycling, pre-natal aerobics and aqua-natal classes.

Modified yoga, Pilates and tâ€™ai chi are also good choices as they will stretch and strengthen your muscles.

Itâ€™s best to avoid racquet or contact sports or any form of exercise that jars the joints - like jogging and high-impact aerobics.

From the middle to the end of your second trimester, as your bump grows, you will want to avoid exercising on your back. Instead, adapt movements so you can sit, stand or lie on your side.

If you are relatively new to exercise start with two or three short sessions a week. Always warm up first with some moderate movement and stretches, step up the activity for around 15 minutes of aerobic activity then finish with some simple stretches and breathing exercises.

Once you find you can do this easily you can gradually increase your aerobic stints to a maximum of 30 minutes. Or stick to the easier routine and do it several times a week. But start to cut down when you enter your third trimester.

Remember you are not training for a marathon. Donâ€™t over-do it.

o Stop immediately if you feel faint, light-headed or breathless during exercise.

o Wear a supportive bra.

o Keep your movements gentle and avoid making jerky or bouncing movements.

o Always do warm-up and cool down stretches when doing aerobic exercise.

o Some yoga poses are not suitable for pregnancy so always check with your teacher or go to a prenatal class. Do not follow DVDs which are for non-pregnant people.

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Debra Aspinall is an experienced journalist and the editor and leading writer for the Emmaâ€™s Diary website, one of the UKs foremost pregnancy and baby websites. She writes on how to get pregnant, a pregnancy week by week, a first trimester , raspberry leaf tea and etc. If you are searching for pregnancy information, please visit us at Emmasdiary.co.uk.

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