

Pregnancy & Exercise:

Many women get pregnant & are unsure about whether or not they should exercise. Some are too scared to do too much and others not sure how much is enough. The UK Chief medical officer came up with a simple infographic which has been tried and tested since 2019. Here are the highlights broken down:

1. **Benefits of exercise in pregnancy:** helps control weight gain during and after pregnancy, reduce high blood pressure & diabetes; improves sleep, mood & fitness.
2. **How to get started:** if you are already active, great, Keep going! If you're not, then gradually build your activity week to week from light to mild to moderate to high to small amounts of vigorous exercise.
3. **Aim for 150min of moderate intensity activity every week.** (Things that challenge you but are not too jarring or over strenuous on the body.)
 - a. Carrying bags/shopping
 - b. Riding bikes
 - c. Walking
 - d. Social activities/dancing
 - e. Gym/swimming/yoga/Pilates.
4. **Do muscle strengthening activities 2x/week** – this means something that challenges individual muscle groups in a controlled but greater than average movement. i.e. you should be able to do at least 5 repetitions but not much more than 10 at a time. These activities should not last more than 60 mins.
5. According to the research there is no strong evidence that exercise can do you or the baby harm but **back pain and pelvic pain is common** so it is recommended that you **listen to your body** and reduce the amount or the intensity of the exercise **as you feel your body change**.
6. **Don't bump the bump:** Obviously impact to the abdominal area does have an impact on the baby so try to avoid major impact to your abdomen.

Reference:

- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/832868/uk-chief-medical-officers-physical-activity-guidelines.pdf ; last updated: 7th Sept 2019

There are also some great Australian resources:

- <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/physical-activity-and-exercise-during-pregnancy-guidelines-brochure>
- <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/guidelines-for-physical-activity-and-exercise-during-pregnancy-poster>

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QUIZ QUESTIONS:

1. what are the benefits of exercise in preg?
2. What intensity exercise is recommended?
3. If you haven't exercised, Should you start?
4. Do you have to do muscle strengthening activities?