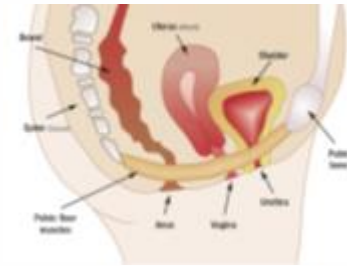


Exercise while pregnant (ante-natal)

Check with your LMC/GP before starting exercise. Your choice of pregnancy exercise will depend on your previous experience of exercise, only YOU know your body and what it is capable of. Keep well hydrated. Shorter, more frequent periods of exercise are a safe approach. Take the 'talk-test' to measure whether you're exercising too strenuously - you should be able to converse easily while you are exercising during pregnancy. Stop Exercising if you experience; dizziness, nausea, blurred vision, faintness, headaches, shortness of breath, pounding heart or palpitations, uterine contractions, vaginal bleeding, joint pain. If the problem persists, see your LMC/GP.

Pelvic Floor Exercises

Lay down on the floor or in a seated position, relax your breathing, concentrating on your tummy as you exhale. Nice big inhale, then as you start a long slow exhale, start squeezing your butt crack and move forward like a zip towards the pelvis, as you get to the pelvis, lift upwards. This can take some getting used to but using visualisations such as squeezing in and up as you exhale, and then you relax as you inhale. Ensure you feel the relax as well as the lift. These should not feel uncomfortable.



Wall Squats

Stand with back pushed against the wall -flat, slide down into squat on the exhale, inhale as you return to start position. Only go as low as you feel comfortable.

Glute Bridge/Hip Raise

Limit the time spent on the back and try while laying on the bed, rather than the floor. Lay on back with knees bent and push pelvis toward roof on the exhale, inhale as you return them to start position, maintaining a steady pelvis is vital.



Superman Planks

Take opposite arm and leg off exhale, inhale as you return them to 4-point kneeling, maintaining steady pelvis is vital.

Aqua Mums

A fun physical activity option for all mums. A full bodied workout, in shallow or deep water. Suitable while pregnant and post-birth. For more details visit: <https://www.sportbop.co.nz/get-active/maternal-health/>

For more safe and fun exercise options in your area, check out Sport BOP's **Activity Directory** and Pregnant & New Mums category by visiting: www.bit.ly/getinvolvedmums

Maternal Green Prescription

Exercise after your baby is born (post-natal)

Check with your LMC/GP before starting exercise to screen for Abdominal Separation (Diastasis Recti), a condition that is very common after pregnancy. Your abdominal muscles are joined together by connective tissue and can be stretched apart during pregnancy. This may contribute to lower back pain as well as pelvic floor issues and does need to be addressed.

Stop Exercising if you experience; dizziness, nausea, blurred vision, faintness, headaches, shortness of breath, pounding heart or palpitations, uterine contractions, vaginal bleeding, joint pain. If the problem persists, make an appointment for a check-up with your LMC/GP.

GETTING STARTED

- Try to do each exercise everyday
- Warm up carefully – 3-5 mins walk around the room, march on the spot, or walk outside
- Take it slowly & rest when you need to
- Don't hold your breath when doing this circuit, breathing is important with doing the hardest part of the movement on the exhale.

Pelvic floor exercises can be started within days after the birth. You can return to light exercise such as walking after 6 weeks for natural birth with no complications and after 12 weeks for a caesarean with no complications. Modify your programme to reduce duration, intensity and impact as needed. Begin very gently, gradually increasing the duration of your workout as your fitness builds. No pressups, burpees, situps, or mountain climbers (gently re-introduce these movements if done prior to pregnancy).

For more support visit: www.bopdhb.govt/healthadvice/a-z-of-health-advice/pelvic-health

Exercises to do at home

Abdominal Muscles

The following exercises will help improve your abdominal tone and help to support good posture. Try exercises 10 times x3 times a day.

Deep abdominal exercises

- Lie on your back with your knees bent
- Place hands on the tummy below the belly button, breathe in and as you breathe out gently draw your pelvic bones together, gently drawing tummy away from your hand.
- Hold as you breathe out and relax as you breathe in.
- Progress as able to doing these exercises in sitting and standing



Pelvic Tilt

- Lie on back with knees bent
- Gently tighten your pelvic floor and lower tummy muscles and flatten your back into the bed as you breathe out
- Hold for 3-5seconds



Leg slides

- Lie on your back with your knees bent
- As you breathe out gently tighten pelvic floor and lower tummy as you straighten out the leg, keeping the pelvis steady
- Breathe in as you bend the leg up again
- Repeat on other leg



Single knee drop out

- Lie on your back with knees bent
- As you breathe out gently tighten pelvic floor and lower tummy as you move one knee out to the side keeping the pelvis steady
- Slowly bring leg back to the middle
- Repeat on other leg



Hip bends

- Lie on your back knees bent
- Breathe in, as you breathe out gently tighten the pelvic floor and lower tummy as you bring you knee up
- Slowly lower down again
- Repeat on the other leg



Clam

- Lie on your side with your hips and knees bent
- Breathe in, as you breathe out gently tighten your pelvic floor and lower tummy, bring your knees apart keeping ankles together
- Try to keep your pelvis still through the movement
- Repeat on the other leg



Going home

Remember when you go home you will need time and rest to heal; so take your time gradually increasing your activity levels as you feel able.

Look after your back, try to stand as upright as possible

Changing and Bathing

- Adapt your working surface to waist height to reduce stooping over and developing backache
- You can kneel on the ground and change on the sofa
- Always remember not to leave your baby unattended in case they roll off

