Pregnancy Exercise Effects and 4 Safe Pregnancy Exercise by Debra Aspinall

Article published on April 17th 2012 | Family

Research has shown that if you exercise during pregnancy youâ€™ll gain 7lb less than pregnant women who donâ€™t exercise, while still staying safely in the healthy weight-gain target range.

A woman who continues to exercise throughout her pregnancy is also less likely to have complications in labour, will recover more quickly from the rigours of birth and be able to cope with a demanding newborn more easily.

Here are four safe pregnancy exercises:

Walking: Walking strengthens the heart and lungs, improves circulation and can be done in short 10-minute sessions. It is an ideal pregnancy exercise as it can be started at any stage of pregnancy and be easily fitted into your daily routine. Walking is low impact so keeps the stress off your joints and offers less chance of injury.

Make sure you have good, supportive footwear (you may have to go up half a size by your third trimester) and avoid walking on slippery or uneven surfaces.

After your baby is born you can continue walking with her in a buggy or in a sling or backpack. If your arms are free you can swing them back and forth which will give you a good all-over workout.

Swimming: Moving in water while pregnant provides resistance which helps strengthen your heart, lungs and muscles and poses little risk of injury so itâ€™s a great pregnancy exercise.

Whether you are actually swimming, walking, treading water or dancing in it you can exercise well without overheating and, no matter how big your pregnancy belly, youâ€™ll feel graceful while in the water.

If any particular movement gives you a neck, back or shoulder ache or pain donâ€™t continue with that movement.

After baby is born you can go to mummy and baby swimming classes together!

Pilates: Pilates strengthens your abs and other core muscles which can help prevent and lessen lower back pain and even help you push during labour.

Speak to your instructor about using a wedge or cushion to keep your head higher than your tummy so you donâ€™t get dizzy and avoid lying flat on your back during the second and third trimester.

Always make sure you tell your instructor you are pregnant â€“ whatever stage you are at.

Yoga: Pregnant women can feel off balance and yoga improves balance while at the same time relieving stress through breathing and meditation techniques.

It can also sooth any aches and pains and opens up the hip joints which is useful for delivery and makes it an ideal pregnancy exercise.

While yoga can be continued through all three trimesters even those who are experts should avoid extreme positions where the legs are stretched far apart and should avoid lying on their backs after

the first trimester.

Again always make sure you tell your instructor you are pregnant â€“ whatever stage you are at.

Article Source:
http://www.articleside.com/family-articles/pregnancy-exercise-effects-and-4-safe-pregnancy-exercise.htm - Article Side

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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 pre pregnancy advice, a signs of pregnancy, a first trimester, raspberry leaf tea and etc. If you are searching for free baby stuff, please visit us at Emmasdiary.co.uk.

Article Keywords:
pregnancy, Pregnancy Week by Week, Pregnancy Stages

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