



Fit For Pregnancy

Get some rest

The fatigue you feel in the first and third trimesters is your body's way of saying "slow down". A nap in the middle of the day may seem like a luxury you can't afford, but both you and your baby will benefit. If you can't sleep, at least put your feet up and relax for 30 minutes or more, in whatever way suits you best.

Exercise Regularly

A good exercise programme can give you the strength and endurance you'll need to carry the weight you gain during pregnancy and to handle the physical demands of labour. It will also make it much easier to get back into shape after the baby is born. A recent study found that staying active can boost your levels of serotonin, a brain chemical linked to mood. If you are used to taking exercise in the form of a sport, you can continue with this as long as it feels comfortable for you, unless your particular sport carries a risk of falls or knocks. More gentle exercise such as walking, swimming, aqua-aerobics, and yoga are particularly beneficial.

The Pelvic Tilt



A

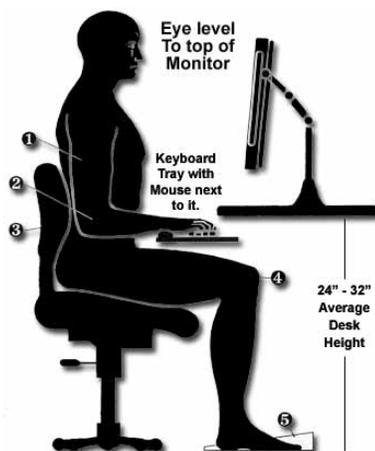


B

Improves the flexibility of your pelvis and back and strengthens your stomach muscles

1. Kneel down keeping your back flat (A)
2. Breathe in, pull in your stomach and tighten your buttocks.
3. Breathe out slowly, tilt your pelvis forward, so that your back arches (B)
4. Hold for a few seconds, then gently relax and breath in.
5. Hold for a few seconds, then gently relax and breath in. Repeat 1-5 several times

Sitting well



Good posture not only prevents strain in your lower back, but keeps your neck and shoulders relaxed and in late pregnancy, helps your baby lie in a good position

1. Sit on a chair, making sure that it's at a comfortable height, to allow you to use your arms freely while keeping your shoulders relaxed and spine upright.
2. Feel the way your weight seems to fall through your "sitting" bones onto the seat and softly release your lower back downwards.
3. Gently lengthen your spine from the back of your waist up towards the very top of your head, but without arching or pulling up your lower back. Relax your tummy muscles.
4. Relax your shoulders and arms and gently raise your breastbone a little, making space for the baby in front.
5. Relax the back of your neck and your jaw, allowing your head to find it's natural balance, and breath evenly in your normal rhythm.

Practicalities You will need a warm uncluttered space (preferably carpeted). It is important to be comfortable while you exercise: wear a baggy T-shirt and leggings, loose trousers or shorts – with good supporting footwear. Listen to what your body tells you. Stop when you have had enough.

Further Information

For further information on fitness in pregnancy refer to the "Fit for Pregnancy" leaflet which your caregiver will provide you with.



