

EXERCISE AFTER PREGNANCY

Regular exercise can:



Help reduce and manage stress



Keep your body healthy to support you and your baby



Prevent chronic diseases like diabetes and high blood pressure



Ease feelings of anxiety and depression and support mental health



Help you fall asleep easier and improve your quality of sleep



Exercise and your body after pregnancy

Exercise in the postpartum period can help your body gain strength, recover from pregnancy and birth, and maintain a healthy weight.

Each person's healthy weight and body size is different, and you can talk with your provider about what this means for you. Along with exercise, there are many great ways to keep your body healthy after pregnancy.



Nourish your body

Eating healthy food can support your physical recovery and your energy and mood.



Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding helps your postpartum metabolism "reset" and is a great source of nutrition for your baby.

See the next page for tips to get started.

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How can I exercise in the postpartum period?

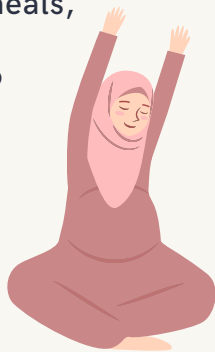
If you had surgery or medical complications with your birth, it's best to talk to your medical provider about when and how to begin exercising. If you had a delivery with no medical problems, you can start exercising as soon as you feel ready. Start gently, listen to your body, and stop if you feel pain.

Here are some tips to support you:



Start Slowly

You can start with walking, stretches, and using light weights, gradually increasing intensity. It's best to avoid high-impact exercise like heavy lifting and running until the pelvic floor heals, usually around six to eight weeks postpartum.



Make it Fun

Find activities you enjoy, in locations where you feel safe. Exercising at home, outside, in a group, at a community class, or at a gym, are all good options.

Receive Support

Exercise can be a chance to take time for yourself while another person cares for your baby. It can also be a social activity. Consider asking a friend to be an exercise partner so that you can support each other.

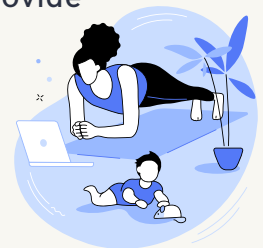


Prepare for Your Workout

You may want to have water nearby to sip during exercise, nurse or express milk in advance to avoid potential discomfort from engorged breasts, and wear a well-fitting bra that gives plenty of support.

Create a Routine

Even if only for a few minutes a day, an enjoyable routine can help you stay healthy and build strength. Mobile apps and online exercise videos can help provide structure.



Honor Your Body and Your Efforts

Pregnancy and birth are big asks of your body, and everyone's recovery looks different. Celebrate each step, give yourself grace, and remember—this is a time of adjustment, not perfection.

For more information or ideas, ask your provider, care coordinator, community resource center, and other people in your support system.