

PRESCRIPTION *for health*



SAMPLE EXERCISE PLAN

The calendar below will provide you with a sample workout plan that includes both aerobic and resistance exercise

SUNDAY
Rest Day
MONDAY
Prenatal Yoga
TUESDAY
30 Minute Walk Outside with 10-15 Minute Warm-up and Cool-down
WEDNESDAY
Prenatal Yoga
THURSDAY
Rest Day
FRIDAY
Rest Day
SATURDAY
30 Minute Walk Outside with 10-15 Minute Warm-up and Cool-down

ABOUT US

The *Commit to Fit!* Prescription for Health Program is an evidence-based, best practice program that is designed to increase the practice of disease-specific physical activity and support linkages to community-based fitness and nutrition.

Commit to Fit! is a community-wide health behavior improvement initiative designed to promote the practice of healthy lifestyles in Genesee County by utilizing a common message and strategy that engages all residents. To facilitate improved health behaviors throughout the year, *Commit to Fit!* offers community-based classes as well as annual community-wide challenges centered around physical activity, nutrition, and overall wellness. *Commit to Fit!* is free to all those who live, learn, work, and play in Flint & Genesee County.



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WHY IS EXERCISE DURING PREGNANCY IMPORTANT?

Physical activity and reproduction are normal parts of life, and for normal healthy women, combining regular exercise and pregnancy appears to benefit both mother and baby in many ways. Exercise can help keep pregnancy weight gain in check, prevent gestational diabetes and pregnancy-induced hypertension, and possibly reduce length of labor. Participation in regular weight-bearing exercise has been shown to improve maternal fitness, restrict weight gain without compromising fetal growth, and accelerate postpartum recovery. In addition, the psychological benefits of exercise are undeniable, and should be nurtured by all who care for pregnant women



FIRST TRIMESTER:

During the first trimester, major physiological changes are taking place, even though maternal body changes are few. During low-level exercise, blood pressure and pulse responses are not dramatically different from those in the non-pregnant woman, but fatigue may be noticed earlier during exercise. As early pregnancy progresses, blood volume expands and the uterus continues to enlarge. Weight gain is usually small but can range from 0 to 10 pounds. During this time, the fetus is undergoing its most important growth, including development of organs and limbs. For this reason, a proper balance of nutrition, hydration, exercise, and rest assume great importance. **It is important for the pregnant woman to avoid large increases in her body temperature during exercise.** Fortunately, adequate hydration, regular exercise, and pregnancy all improve a woman's capacity to dissipate heat. The individual effects of these on heat dissipation appear to complement one another when

combined. Thus, well hydrated, fit pregnant women regulate their core body temperatures more efficiently than sedentary people, and undergo less temperature variation during exercise. Loose fitting clothing and a cool environment are also important in protecting against heat stress.

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SECOND & THIRD TRIMESTERS:

The second and third trimesters are accompanied by dramatic changes in a woman's body. Normal weight gain ranges between 22 and 35 pounds and is centered around the abdomen and pelvis, which alters both posture and the center of gravity. During this time, exercises requiring balance and agility may become more difficult due to the change in the pregnant woman's weight distribution. The use of properly adjusted exercise equipment, a smooth floor surface, and/or aquatic exercises are extremely helpful. The extra caloric demands of pregnancy are extremely variable; no fixed equation accurately estimates the amount of increased caloric need. The best measure of sufficient caloric intake is adequate weight gain. Small, frequent meals and regular fluid intake throughout the day are most desirable in maintaining a steady flow of nutrients while minimizing the discomfort of exercising on a full stomach, and avoiding dehydration and low blood sugar. Pregnant, sedentary women commonly require approximately 3,000 calories per day during the second and third trimesters to ensure adequate stores of nutrients. A physically active expectant mother would therefore have a higher caloric need, in order to compensate for calories burned off during strenuous exercise.



SAFETY:

As changes in weight distribution occur, balance and coordination may be affected. Exercise programs should be modified if they pose a significant risk of abdominal injury or fatigue as opposed to relaxation and an enhanced sense of well-being. Until more information is available, exercising while lying on the back or stomach should be avoided after the first trimester.

NUTRITION AND LEAD

Too much lead in your body can:

- Put you at risk of miscarriage
- Cause your baby to be born too early or too small
- Hurt your baby's brain, kidneys, and nervous system
- Cause your child to have learning or behavior problems

Eat foods with Calcium, Iron and Vitamin-C.

- These foods may help protect you and your unborn baby.
- Calcium is in milk, yogurt, cheese, and green leafy vegetables like spinach.
- Iron is in lean red meat, beans, cereals, and spinach.
- Vitamin C is in oranges, green and red peppers, broccoli, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, and juices.

Use bottled water.

If you live, work, or play in Flint, use bottled water.* This is the safest option for pregnant women and children under 6 years old is to use bottled water for drinking, cooking or making formula. Filtered water can be used only if your filter is NSF-certified to remove lead and you follow all instructions on how to use it/when to replace it. For more information and resources visit flintcares.com

*Until further notice.



GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT:

The pregnant woman should monitor her level of exercise and adjust her dietary intake to ensure proper weight gain. If pregnancy is not progressing normally or if vaginal bleeding, membrane rupture, persistent pain, or chronic fatigue are noted, exercise should be stopped until a medical evaluation has been completed. Also, if regular contractions occur more than 30 minutes after exercise, medical evaluation should be sought. This may signify pre-term labor.

STRENGTH TRAINING:

Women who are pregnant may participate in a strength training program that incorporates all major muscle groups with a resistance that permits repetitions (i.e. 12-15 repetitions) to be performed to a point of moderate fatigue. Kegel exercise and those that strengthen the pelvic floor are recommended to decrease the risk of incontinence. Weight-bearing and non-weight-bearing exercise are thought to be safe during pregnancy. Improved maternal fitness is a well-known benefit of non-weight-bearing exercise such as swimming and cycling. Weight-bearing exercises are similarly beneficial as long as they are comfortable. Swimming and stationary cycling are excellent non-weight-bearing exercises, and may be recommended. Walking, jogging and low-impact aerobics programs are good choices when weight-bearing exercise is to be considered. Avoid heavy weightlifting, or similar activities that require straining. Bicycle riding, especially during the second and third trimesters, should be avoided because of changes in balance and the risk of falling.



Follow the FITT Principle When Creating a Resistance Exercise Program!

Frequency – Research suggests an ideal frequency of 3 to 4 days a week because frequency has been shown to be a determinant of birth weight. Women who do not exercise within the recommended frequency (greater than 5 days a week or less than 2 days a week) increase their risk of having a low-birth weight baby. Infants with a low birth weight for gestational age are at risk for perinatal complications and developmental problems, therefore, a prevention of low birth weight is an important health goal.

Intensity – Moderate intensity exercise is recommended for women with a pre-pregnancy BMI of 25 or less. Light intensity exercise is recommended for women with a pre-pregnancy BMI of 25 or more.

Time – 15 minutes or more a day gradually increasing to a maximum of 30 minutes a day of accumulated moderate intensity exercise to total 120 minutes a week. A 10-15 minute warm-up and a 10-15 minute cool-down of light intensity, physical activity is suggested before and after the exercise session, respectively, resulting in approximately 150 minutes a week of accumulated exercise. Women with a pre-pregnancy BMI over 25 who have been medically prescreened can exercise at a light intensity starting at 25 minutes a day, adding 2 minutes a week, until 40 minutes 3 to 4 days a week is achieved.

Type – Do rhythmic exercises using the large muscle groups. Try brisk walking, cycling, and swimming. Choose activities you enjoy and will do regularly in your new, more active lifestyle. Add variety depending on the day or the season to keep your program more enjoyable.

PROGRESSION:

The optimal time to progress is after the first trimester (13th week) because the discomforts and risks of pregnancy are lowest at that time. Gradual progression from a minimum of 15 minutes a day, 3 days a week, to the maximum of approximately 30 minutes a day, 4 days a week.