

I LIKE TO MOVE

STAYING FIT WHILE YOU ARE PREGNANT AND AFTER BABY COMES ALONG IS EASY ONCE YOU KNOW HOW. **KATIE BROWN** TAKES YOU THROUGH THE MOTIONS

If you're pregnant for the first time, it can be confusing to know how and when to exercise but if your doctor has given you the go-ahead, then working out is one of the best things you can do for yourself and your unborn baby. Pregnancy is not usually the time to try and build strength and stamina, but just to maintain it. And there are plenty of ways to keep active. Exercises such as yoga, swimming and walking are usually encouraged through pregnancy.

Yoga works on a mental and a physical level - helping mums-to-be prepare for birth and bond with their unborn baby. Some of the poses and breathing practices can also help relieve unpleasant pregnancy ailments like constipation, sciatica and fluid retention. If you can, attend a class for pregnant women

- that way you should be carefully monitored and are likely to meet other mums-to-be. If you do attend a general class, let your instructor know you're pregnant - never assume they can tell! It's important to work within your comfort zone. Some instructors prefer women to avoid classes until they are in their second trimester (week 12-14), as the risk of miscarriage is higher before this stage.

Physiotherapist and mother of two, Alison Blake runs Bodyball exercise classes for pre and post-natal students using a Swiss ball and Clinical Pilates. She stresses the importance of stabilising the spine and pelvis as well as focusing on the deep abdominals, lower back muscles and pelvic floor.

"I encourage women to do resistance work for the upper body

which helps promote strength and prepares the body for labour and the demands of motherhood," she explains.

Whatever activity you choose, don't expect to carry on with your normal fitness routine. Pregnancy symptoms such as nausea, fatigue and fluid retention can all affect how you feel physically. The hormone 'relaxin' is released through the body, which causes your muscles, tendons and ligaments to relax in preparation for the birth, and this can create minor (and in some cases, major) instability within the pelvis and joints.

After week 20, try to avoid lying on your back as the weight of the uterus restricts the blood supply and can make you feel dizzy and nauseous. It's also best to avoid strong abdominal work, intense

5-MIN EXERCISE ROUTINE for mums-to-be (& new mums)



YOGA BREATHING & ARM STRETCHES

Sit cross-legged. As you inhale, raise arms above your head to meet in a prayer position. Exhale and turn palms face down and lower. Repeat 10 times. Sit for a while with eyes closed and hands gently resting on belly.

Benefits: Opens the chest, encourages deep breathing, can ease nausea and heartburn and release tension.



CAT POSE

Place hands directly below shoulders and knees below hips. Keep lower legs parallel and hands flat to the floor with fingers wide apart. Exhale and curl the tailbone under and bring your chin to your chest. Inhale and lead with the tailbone as you bring the spine into a neutral position and look ahead.

Benefits: Eases back and neck ache, aids digestive system and can ease labour pains.



GATE POSE

Place left lower leg on the ground, take right leg out to the side, hips facing forward. Raise left arm over your head and slide right hand down right leg. Ease into the stretch, do not lean forward or back. Aim to bring your right ear towards your right leg. Repeat twice, change sides.

Benefits: Relieves rib pain, helps to increase the suppleness of pelvic area.



HALF DOG POSE

Stand 3 feet from a wall with feet parallel and hip distance apart. Bend forward from hips, keeping legs straight, place hands on the wall at hip height. Roll upper arms and shoulders away from one another, head and neck in line with spine. Hold for 5 breaths.

Benefits: Lengthens hamstrings, releases pelvic floor and spinal tension, helps improve circulation.



SLEEPING POSE

New and expectant mums up to 20 weeks, lie on back with legs hip distance apart, resting against a wall. Arms out to the side, palms turned up. If you are more than 20 weeks pregnant, lie on your side with head on a blanket and cushion between bent knees. Take deep breaths and relax.

Benefits: Helps to release tension, reduce puffy ankles and ease the nervous system.



SARAH'S WORK-OUT

Sarah Herriot, 38, has worked in the fitness industry for the past 20 years and has three children. She says: "Working out through pregnancy really boosted my energy levels and sense of wellbeing. It also helped my recovery from childbirth."

During her first pregnancy Sarah played golf twice a week with her husband, Alan. "It was very gentle exercise and I loved it, my golf swing improved and I got a real buzz - I played right up until my due date and even had contractions on the course!"

With her subsequent pregnancies, Sarah continued to play golf when she could arrange babysitting and also attended yoga classes. She used the crèche at her gym and worked out four times a week. "I did cardiovascular exercises on the cross trainer and bicycle for about 20 minutes at a time and worked to about seventy per cent of my maximum heart rate," she says. "Up until 32 weeks I did a spinning class, but then my belly got so big I couldn't reach the handles!" In the final stages of her last pregnancy, Sarah restricted her routine to swimming and yoga stretches.

WALK THIS WAY

A fantastic way to lift your heart rate, energy levels and mood is by walking - always wear good support shoes and a well-fitting bra and avoid taking wide strides (to protect your pelvis). If you already run regularly, and are enjoying a problem-free pregnancy, then you should be able to continue your fitness routine at a modified level. Expert advice says: "Exercise in the cool of the morning, have an awareness of what your heart rate is and stay well hydrated."



M2M DVD OFFER

Preparing for a baby is so exciting, but it can also be a tad overwhelming! The Mum to Mum series of DVDs makes it easy... everything you need to know about buying for a new baby and setting up your home is now on one easy to follow DVD. Every month this year, 3 lucky BUMP readers will receive a copy of DVD1 "The how to guide on preparing to bring home your baby".

TOTAL
PRIZE VALUE
\$1,078

BUMP OFFER

Aussie designer Renae Plant is behind "baby under manufacturing process" - fun and fashionable pregnancy apparel with a twist for mamas-to-be and papas-to-be, plus baby products for the [bump] in question. We're giving away 3 t-shirts every month from 12 hip designs. For more images and details of each month's feature t-shirt, visit www.bumpmag.com.au



TOTAL
PRIZE VALUE
\$2,934



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EGG SEAMLESS UNDERWEAR

Support your new curves with EGG's new Seamless Underwear - it gently moulds to your body shape, keeping a nice smooth line. The set comprises a Seamless Singlet, Underbelly Knicker and Overbelly Knicker. Total value \$72.69/set. BUMP has 5 sets to give away each month for 10 months, starting February, 2007. www.eggmaternity.com.au

TOTAL
PRIZE VALUE
\$3,635



TOTAL
PRIZE VALUE
\$300

BAOBAB CLOTHING

Baobab Clothing is modern, unique and fun. The range includes envelope tees, kimono stud suits, body suits, hoodies and the 'essential' range - generic clothing for babies and toddlers. All are made from super-soft, 100% cotton interlock fabric in a range of colours. To celebrate the launch of their new online shopping store www.baobab.com.au Baobab is offering BUMP readers the chance to win a gorgeous children's wardrobe to the value of \$300.

DELUXE BABY BAG SET

Aromababy and BUMP are giving 5 lucky readers the chance to win this fabulous prize from one of Australia's most respected baby skincare brands. The Baby Bag Set includes: Natural Baby Lotion, Moisturising Nappy Change Cream, Bath Gel, Pure Hair Cleanse, Aromawipes, Barrier Balm, Natural Baby Sponge, Padded baby change mat, Clear zip bag and a Deluxe cylinder toiletry/travel bag.

TOTAL
PRIZE VALUE
\$500

