

SINGAPORE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES FOR PREGNANT & POSTPARTUM WOMEN



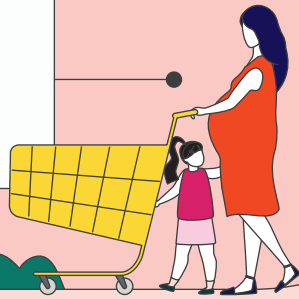
Pregnant and postpartum women without contraindications are encouraged to engage in physical activity not only through recreation and leisure, but also when in different settings - At home (light household chores), as a form of transportation (cycling, walking, jogging), or in occupational and community settings.

MOVE WITH CARE & NURTURE

RECOMMENDATIONS

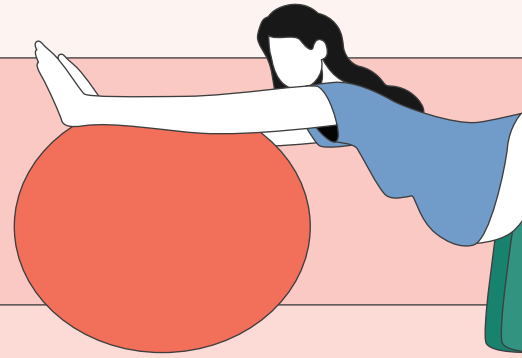
KEEP MOVING

Limit the amount of time spent being sedentary, particularly recreational screen time, by **engaging in activities of any intensity**.



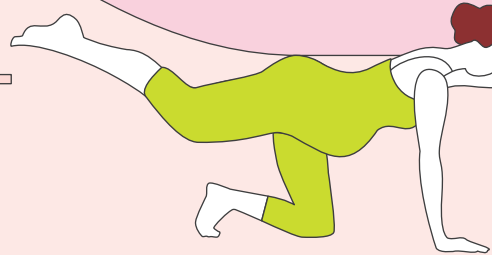
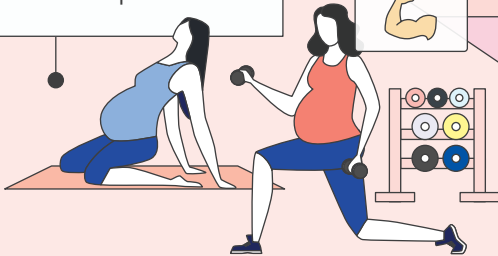
HIT 150

Engage in at least **150 minutes** of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity per week.



BUILD STRENGTH

Incorporate **muscle-strengthening** activities. Adding gentle stretching may also be helpful.



TIPS



Doing some physical activity is better than none.



Ease into your physical activity routine progressively. Listen to your body and seek your doctor's recommendation on suitable activities if you are unsure of how to start.



Core strengthening activities and pelvic muscle training may be performed regularly to strengthen the trunk and reduce the risk of urinary incontinence.

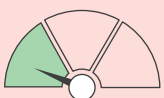


Start by doing small amounts of physical activity, and gradually increase frequency, intensity and duration over time.

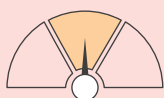


Avoid participating in activities which involve physical contact or a higher risk of falling.

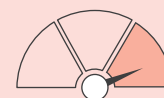
EXERCISE INTENSITY



Light
Can talk in full sentences and sing



Moderate
Can talk in phrases or short sentences but cannot sing



Vigorous
Have difficulty talking

GUIDELINES BY SUB-POPULATION: PREGNANT & POSTPARTUM WOMEN

UPDATES IN THE SINGAPORE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES (SPAG): PREGNANT & POSTPARTUM WOMEN

WHAT'S NEW

Encourage physical activity for pregnant and postpartum women without contraindications.

Guidelines for the adjustments to physical activity during and after pregnancy.

Safety considerations of physical activity for pregnant and postpartum women.



IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT...

A variety of aerobic, muscle-strengthening and light stretching exercises should be incorporated during pregnancy and the postpartum period.

Pregnant and postpartum women should avoid vigorous-intensity physical activity.

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS



Avoid excessive heat



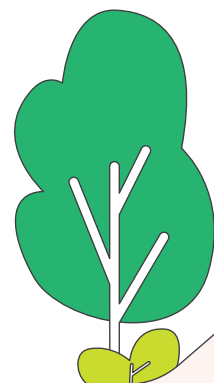
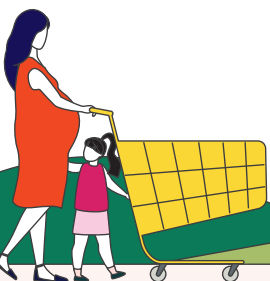
Avoid contact sports and exercises with high fall risks



Ease back into physical activity gradually



Consult your doctor when needed



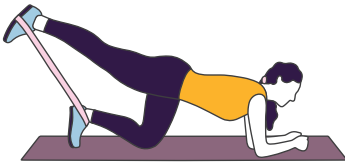
RECOMMENDED ADJUSTMENTS OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY DURING & AFTER PREGNANCY

Women who have been engaged in light- to moderate-intensity physical activity before pregnancy should continue this regime during pregnancy and adjust the intensity of exercises according to their bodies during the postpartum period.

Women who have been physically active or who have engaged in vigorous-intensity aerobic activity can continue these activities during pregnancy and during the postpartum period.

INDIVIDUAL

BEFORE PREGNANCY



Commit to an active lifestyle by following the recommendations for an adult.

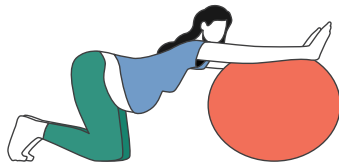
Light- to moderate-intensity

E.g.: Pilates, jogging, swimming

Vigorous-intensity

E.g.: Running, floorball, basketball, netball

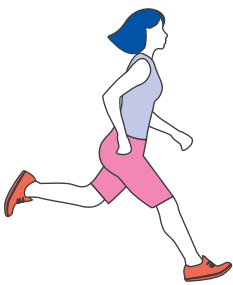
DURING PREGNANCY



Reduce intensity of activity, keep at moderate-intensity. Avoid contact sports and risk of falls.

E.g.: Elliptical, yoga, jogging, swimming

AFTER PREGNANCY



Listen to your body and ease into pre-pregnancy exercise regime gradually, building up intensity progressively.

Low-intensity

E.g.: Walking, light stretching

Moderate-intensity

E.g.: Brisk walking, post-natal yoga, swimming

Vigorous-intensity

E.g.: Floorball, running, basketball, netball



REMEMBER



It is safe to be active postpartum



You can be active whilst breastfeeding



Start pelvic floor exercises early to strengthen your muscles

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE: PREGNANT & POSTPARTUM WOMEN

PREGNANT WOMEN



GESTATIONAL WEIGHT GAIN:

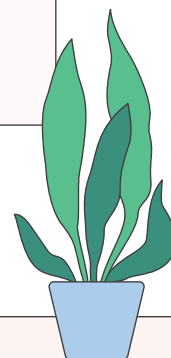
Engaging in physical activity during pregnancy is significantly associated with reduced gestational weight gain.

GESTATIONAL DIABETES:

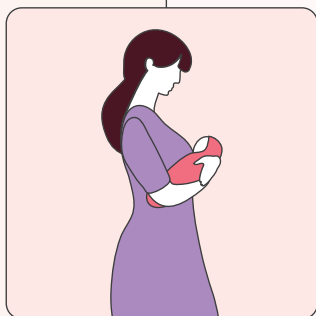
Engaging in physical activity before and during pregnancy is associated with a reduced risk of gestational diabetes.

PREMATURE BIRTH:

Women who engaged in vigorous-intensity physical activity had a small but significantly reduced risk of prematurity.



POSTPARTUM WOMEN



POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION:

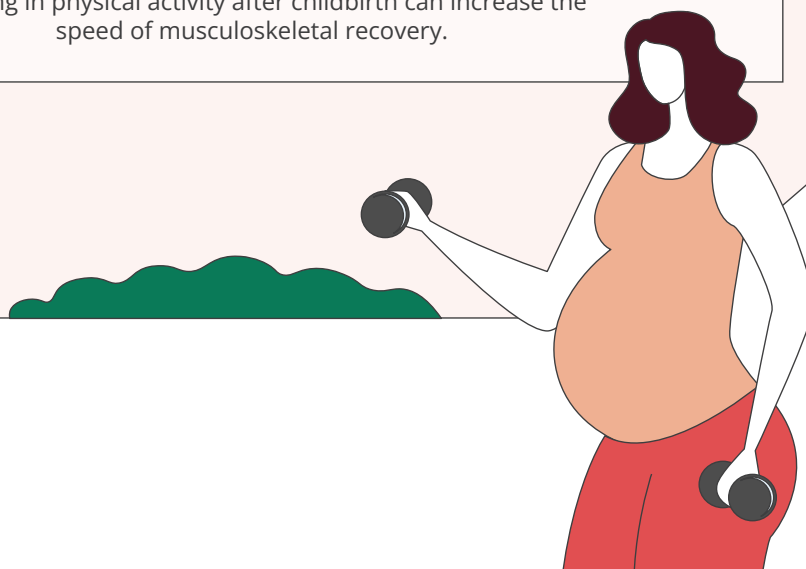
Evidence demonstrates that physical activity during pregnancy may reduce postpartum depression.

POSTPARTUM WEIGHT GAIN:

Regular physical activity can help minimise weight gain in the postpartum period.

RECOVERY:

Engaging in physical activity after childbirth can increase the speed of musculoskeletal recovery.



CASE STUDIES: PREGNANT & POSTPARTUM WOMEN

CASE STUDY #1



ISLA, 28

First-time mother who has always led an active lifestyle

Isla is 18 weeks pregnant. Before she got pregnant, Isla enjoyed an active lifestyle where she engaged in a variety of workouts, ranging from boxing to spin classes during her leisure time. She is motivated to continue being physically active, so she keeps her doctor informed of her activities throughout her pregnancy. She used to go for long hikes and continued to do so in her 1st trimester. As her pregnancy progressed, she slowly adapted to her body's condition and replaced hikes with daily 30-minute walks in the park. Isla also changed her weekly workouts to resistance band exercises to strengthen her muscles. Each weekend, Isla will attend a prenatal yoga session for additional strength training and to learn some simple exercises that she can safely do at home. Isla is looking forward to resuming her physical activity and trying out postnatal yoga after her delivery, once her doctor deems it is safe for her to do so.

Isla has adopted a great mindset of maintaining an active lifestyle throughout pregnancy. For expectant mothers like Isla, it is important to note the following:



Be mindful of exertions associated with exercise and pace yourself accordingly.

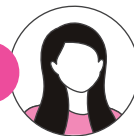


Consider trying yoga to maintain body strength or activities like aqua aerobics for a low-impact workout.



Due to Singapore's hot and humid climate, it is important to be mindful of your exercising environment as pregnancies make you more vulnerable to the heat.

CASE STUDY #2



JAIME, 32

Sedentary mother with an increased risk of Gestational Diabetes Mellitus

Ever since her first pregnancy, Jaime has been leading a more sedentary lifestyle as she juggles the demands of work and taking care of her child. Recently, Jaime learnt that she is expecting her second child and her doctor advised that it is important to start adopting an active lifestyle for herself and her child. Jaime was diagnosed with Gestational Diabetes Mellitus (GDM) during her first pregnancy and coupled with her current inactive lifestyle, she has an increased risk of it recurring.

Jaime goes for a 30-minute stroll only when she finds the free time between a full day of work and caring for her child. With her doctor's advice, she tries to gradually squeeze in a 15-minute workout during lunch time and attends a weekly prenatal yoga class on the weekends. She hopes to gradually build up her activity by consulting her doctor regularly to keep herself and her child healthy.

Jaime's attempt is commendable. For other mothers who are trying to do the same, here are some simple ways to build up your activity levels:



Work closely with your doctor to come up with an exercise regimen that includes aerobic activities and muscle-strengthening exercises.



Plan for pool days or going for long strolls at the park with your family as a workout and spend quality time together.



Try swimming for a low-impact full body workout.