

Exercise basics

Women without medical complications may follow exercise guidelines for non-pregnant people. You should try to do 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on all or most days of the week.

- **Warm-up:** Every workout should begin with a seven to 10 minute warm-up (exercise at a lower intensity than the workout). For example, do some leg swings front and back and side to side as well as some easy side shuffles to loosen the hips.
- **Workout Intensity:** If your breathing is laboured or you can't carry on a conversation, you're working too hard.
- **Cool-down:** Finish with a seven to 10 minute cool-down at the end. After the cool-down be sure to stretch the muscles you used. Post workout stretches should include those for the quadriceps, hip flexors, hamstrings and buttocks. All stretches should be held for a minimum of 30 seconds at the point of tension or tightness, not pain. **Remember, respect your pre-pregnancy flexibility and stretch up to that point, not beyond.**

Cool-down stretches



Gluteus (buttock)



Quadriceps



Hamstrings



Hip flexors

Tips:

- Listen to your body. It is not how much you do, but how consistently you do it during your pregnancy that counts.
- Don't forget to stay hydrated. Drink water before, during and after exercise.
- Don't get overheated. If it's a hot day, think about going for a swim instead of power walking.
- Consult your physician or midwife before starting any new exercise routine.

This information was adapted from Fit to Deliver™