

Benefits of exercising when pregnant

Being active during pregnancy means you're likely maintain a healthier weight and be able to cope better with the physical demands of pregnancy and labour. It also reduces the risk of miscarriage, stillbirth, birth defects and diabetes.

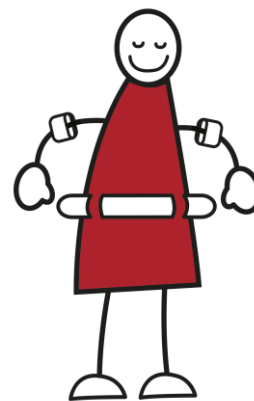
It can also prevent gestational diabetes, which makes your baby grow too big in pregnancy, and can lead to delivery complications and low blood sugar. Being active can also prevent you from getting high blood pressure, which can result in a stillbirth.

And for you, 150 minutes of walking a week makes it easier to get back to your normal weight after your baby is born. It can also:

- Give you more energy, help you sleep better, and reduce feelings of stress, anxiety and depression. So even if you're feeling shattered, it's a great reason to try to get some walking in.
- Make you stronger, so you can carry the weight of your growing baby.
- Prepare your body for the physical challenge of labour. This can help to make labour quicker and reduces the risk of complications.
- Help to lessen the risk of depression after your baby is born.

Top tips:

- Exercise doesn't have to be strenuous to be beneficial
- Make sure you warm up and cool down
- Try to keep active on a daily basis. Half an hour of walking each day can be enough
- Avoid strenuous exercise in hot weather
- Drink plenty of water
- If you go to exercise classes, make sure your teacher is qualified and is aware you are pregnant
- You might like to try swimming because the water will help support your increased weight



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