



By

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Introduction

Welcome to the Be One Hot Mama handbook! Keeping active during pregnancy doesn't have to be difficult. The fitness and nutrition involved while you are pregnant comes down to the basic principles of staying healthy. Throughout this handbook, I will be discussing these principles so that you better understand how to go about your exercise while being pregnant and the right eating habits you should follow.

First thing that comes to mind when thinking about pregnant women exercising is the negative outlook many “old fashion” mind sets have. At one time, the thought of pregnancy and exercise was a big no no. People believed pregnancy is a time to put your feet up and relax. Don't fall into old ways of thinking exercise is bad during your pregnancy. That's just not true. If anything, exercise is a good way to keep yourself healthy and prepare your body for your pregnancy. It's important to keep your body fit and healthy, and this is even more so the case during pregnancy. Over the past couple decades, we have seen the benefits of exercising while being pregnant.

Here are just a few benefits of exercising during pregnancy:

- x Decrease back pain and increase posture
- x Increase your comfort during pregnancy
- x Make labor easier
- x Improves your breathing
- x Higher energy levels
- x Decrease the affect of pregnancy on the body (stretch marks, loose skin, etc.)
- x And best of all, make it easier to lose weight after pregnancy and get that old body back.

If these aren't enough to persuade you to start exercising during pregnancy, there are many more. Then consider this: Women who follow a regular exercise routine throughout their pregnancy have an average length of labor which is 30% shorter than women who don't exercise. Not bad to think about. Women who exercise experience easier pregnancies.

Now that you are pregnant, you will want to pay attention to your body while exercising. The exercises you choose to do should depend on your fitness level before you got pregnant. If you weren't active before you got pregnant, you will want to start off slow and work your way up. If you exercised regularly then you can continue but within reason. You should always check with your doctor before beginning any exercise program while you are pregnant.

Changes in the body

Becoming pregnant will affect your body in quite a few ways. If you are already a decent way along in your pregnancy, you have felt all these effects. Remember to keep these things in mind when you are exercising.

Respiratory System

During pregnancy you will increase your oxygen requirement by about 20 percent. You will begin to breathe much deeper. You will also breathe much quicker because you will become more sensitive to carbon dioxide. This will cause your exercises to feel more difficult than they usually would especially if you exercised before pregnancy. The more oxygen requirement may cause you to feel light-headed during exercise. If this is the case, stop exercising. You don't want to risk falling or injuring your baby or yourself.

Metabolism

When you become pregnant, you will feel like you can never stay cool. Your body temperature rises because your metabolism is working double. Your body is working for two now. It requires more energy. Because of this, you may sweat more during exercising. This is causing your body to overheat in a sense. Keep this in mind throughout your pregnancy. It's always best to refuel yourself with drinking lots of fluids. This will keep you hydrated and will even cool your body during exercise.

Your Heart Rate

When you become pregnant, your body is going to require more blood to be pushed throughout itself. This is so it can help the newcomer develop. The blood flowing will increase to about 1.5 times the regular amount. Because there is more blood in your system at this time, your heart rate will increase and your veins will dilate causing your blood pressure to drop. This can cause you to feel light headed as well during exercise. Many women experience their heart rates being extremely fast during pregnancy. You don't want to make yourself uncomfortable when exercising so keep your heart rate below 140.

Muscles and Joints

You may notice during pregnancy your flexibility increases. This is because your body releases more progesterone which is responsible for the release of relaxin. Relaxin is a hormone that helps develop ligaments throughout the body. With more ligament your body is able to be more flexible. The extra ligament may also cause back pain and weaker joints though. Be cautious when doing exercise routines during pregnancy. The main goal is to make your body stronger for pregnancy.



Exercising During Pregnancy

If you are not pregnant but plan on getting pregnant, I would suggest starting an exercise routine as soon as possible. This will make it easier to exercise during your pregnancy. This doesn't mean women who have never exercised shouldn't begin while pregnant. Please check with your doctor before starting any exercise program.

Your fitness goals change when you become pregnant. If your old exercise style was training for a marathon, that's about to change. You're preparing your body to deliver a baby not fit into a certain pair of jeans. You never want to put yourself or the baby under heavy strain. Start off with short intervals of exercise and gradually increase intensity.

Like during all exercise, I recommend a good warm up and stretch period. This can help reduce pain during and after exercise as well as decrease the risk of injury. The increased blood flow during warm ups will only help your exercise.

A simple warm up is always best. The exercise should be low impact like walking for 5-10 minutes at a nice steady pace. You can gradually increase your speed as well through the warm up. Your stretch period should include all areas of the body. Hold a stretch for at least 15 seconds. Don't stretch to the point of pain and don't allow yourself to bounce while stretching.

Stretching Exercises

Do these simple stretches everyday to increase your muscle flexibility and reduce chance of injury:

- ◆ **Neck rotation:** Lower your head forward. Relax the muscle in your neck and slowly rotate your head in a circle. One complete rotation is 1 repetition. You should do 8 repetitions.
- ◆ **Shoulder rotation:** Relax your shoulders and rotate them slowly. Do 8 repetitions of this as well.
- ◆ **Arm rotation:** Bring your arms up out to your sides. Slowly rotate your arms in a complete circle, loosening your shoulders as well as increasing blood flow to the finger tips. 10 repetitions of this should be completed.
- ◆ **Scissor kicks:** Sit on the end of a chair or bed with your legs and feet extended. Gently move your legs up and down like a scissor kick.
- ◆ **Hamstring Stretch:** Bring one foot forward about 2 feet. Slowly bend forward putting your weight on the front leg. This will help strengthen the thighs as well as loosen the hamstring. Switch legs and repeat for 5 repetitions on each side.
- ◆ **Ankle rotation:** Sit on a chair and lift one leg. Rotate your foot in a

circle making sure the ankles are getting nice and loose.

Do this routine each day before your exercise and you will decrease your chance of injury.

Cardiovascular Exercise

I'm going to start off with talking about your cardiovascular exercise. Like stated before, we don't want your heart rate exceeding 140 beats per minute. So for the women who run at a fast pace, this might change the intensity of your workout. Your cardio workout should be at nice steady pace at which you can hold a conversation with someone. You don't want to be out of breath while your exercising. This will usually put you at around 120 beats per minute.

If you are new to exercise, then you will want to start off slowly. Choose a steady pace and stay at that pace for at least 15 minutes. Continue at this for 3-4 workouts then increase by 5 minutes. Keep this up until you reach 30 minutes. Once you have reached a comfortable pace for 30 minutes, you can begin to increase your intensity. But remember, you don't want to push yourself too hard.

During your first trimester, you may experience a lack of energy. This is common for women during pregnancy though. There have been many reports of women all of a sudden feeling a boost of energy during their second trimester. This is the point most women feel ready to begin an exercise routine. The earlier you start, the easier it will be for your body to adapt.

You should be doing 2-3 days of cardiovascular exercise at 30 minutes.

Remember to keep your pace steady with your heart rate around 120.

Which is the best cardio exercise to do during pregnancy?

There are many low impact options that are great for pregnant women.

Let's look at the benefits of a few:

- **Bicycling**

I wouldn't suggest riding an actual bike during pregnancy. The risk of falling is too great, and we never want to put the baby at an increased risk. The stationary bike on the other hand, is a great piece of equipment. Its low impact on the knees and back as well as very safe. It would be pretty hard to fall off a stationary bike.

- **Swimming**

One of the best ways to get all around exercise is definitely swimming. While you are pregnant, you have an added buoyancy which will greatly take the strain off your body from the extra weight. Swimming would be my number one choice on exercising during pregnancy. On top of being a great workout for the whole body, it can reduce morning sickness during your first trimester. Don't over do it while swimming though.

- **Walking**

Walking is an easy low impact exercise to do while pregnant. It's easy to find a steady pace walking and it allows you to get outside and enjoy the scenery. Walking with a friend helps make the time pass by quicker as well. Ask your partner to walk with you allowing you more time to bond as well as increasing your fitness level.

Any of these exercises will be great for improving your cardiovascular health

during pregnancy .

Resistance Training

To increase tone and strength in your muscles, you will want to include resistance training in your exercise. Resistance training really helps ease your labor with increasing your stamina. A great way to do resistance training during pregnancy is with exercise machines or resistance bands. Free weights are okay too, but I like to try and stay away from anything that may hit your stomach.

Remember when I talked about your joints being looser during pregnancy? Well this is good to remember when thinking about resistance training. You should always perform your weight lifting in a controlled and slow motion. You are going to work with lighter weights than you normally would and also you will increase the number of repetitions you do.

When you reach your second trimester, you should stop lifting weights while standing or lying down. Each of these positions restricts blood flow throughout the body causing less blood to get to your uterus. This leaves the baby with less of what is needed for it to develop the best it can. Do your weight exercises while in a seated position during your second and third trimesters.

Resistance exercises should be done at least twice a week on different days than your cardio workouts. You should also split your muscle groups up between resistance days. You can choose to do each resistance day as a full body workout day, but it will help your muscles recover if you split your muscle groups up between days. A sample routine would be two days cardio and two days resistance training. This split could look like this:

Monday – Chest, Shoulder, Tricep, Thighs

Tuesday – Cardiovascular day

Wednesday – rest

Thursday – Back, Biceps, Hamstrings

Friday – Cardiovascular day

Saturday and Sunday – rest.

Here are some good exercises to consider:

● **Military press:** Keep good posture while seated in a sturdy chair. Keep your feet flat on the floor and hold a dumbbell in each hand above your head. Slowly lower the weight down to your shoulders. Repeat this up and down motion.

Complete 15 repetitions. Keep the weight low around 10-15 pounds each dumbbell.

● **Seated Row:** You can use a resistance band or the appropriate exercise machine to complete this exercise. Sit with your back straight on the floor. Extend your legs in front of you with your knees very slightly bent. Put the resistance band around your feet and hold an end in each hand. Squeeze your back muscles and pull the band toward your waist. Make sure to focus on using your middle back muscles. Keep good posture throughout the motion without bending forward or backward.

● **Chest Press:** In a seated position, wrap a resistance band around the back of your chair. Holding the ends of the resistance band in each hand, press forward until your arms are extended. Focus on using the muscles of the chest during this motion. To increase resistance, grab the resistance band farther up.

● **Tailor Pose:** This exercise will help loosen your hips and open your pelvis

to prepare for labor. It will also help the tension in your lower back. Sit up straight against a wall. Keep the soles of your feet touching each other with your knees bent. Gently press your knees down away from each other towards the floor. Hold this position for as long as you can. Don't push too hard, remember to do this slowly and work yourself up.

● **Plie Squat:** This exercise is great for strengthening your thighs. Hold onto the back of a chair with your feet slightly less than shoulder width apart. Keep your toes pointed outward away from each other. Keep your shoulders back and chest lifting while lowering your bottom towards the floor. Make sure that most of your weight is on your heels. Keep your abdominal muscles contracted throughout this motion as well.

Since back pain is so common during pregnancy, here are some ways to alleviate that pain:

★ **Full Back Stretch** – Keep your feet about hip width apart. While holding onto a sturdy object like a chair, bend your knees and round your back bringing your chest down. You should be able to feel the stretch throughout the spine. Repeat this as many times as you would like.

★ **Lower Back Stretch** – While lying on your back with your feet flat on the floor and knees bent, pull one knee up toward your chest. Hold this for at least 5 seconds and then repeat with the other leg.

★ **Shoulder Pinch** – While lying on your back, lay your arms out to your sides. Keep your palms facing upwards and pinch your shoulder blades together. Use your arms to gently push yourself upward. This will help

stretch the abdominals as well as strengthen the back.

After 19 weeks, these exercises are not recommended to be done while lying down. They can be modified to be performed while seated or on your side.

Don't forget to stay cool and hydrated. It's very important to remember this while you are exercising, as you and your baby can more easily overheat during pregnancy. Avoid exercising in hot or humid weather as well. Try and stay in a well ventilated area and wear comfortable clothes while you exercise. It might be a good idea to wear multiple layers so that you can shed one as you get warmer.

You should drink an eight ounce glass of water every 20 minutes during your exercise. Also drink at least 2 glasses before and after your workouts. This should be enough to help keep your body cool and hydrated.

Kegel Exercise

Kegel exercises will strengthen the muscles that support the bladder and uterus. If you strengthen these muscles, you can develop the ability to relax and control muscles used during labor. Kegel exercises are also great for helping heal the tissues damage during pregnancy.

To perform a kegel, think about trying to stop the flow of urine. You should contract the pelvic floor muscles. The great thing about kegels is they can be done anywhere at anytime. Keep your legs, butt and abs still while performing this exercise. Try and hold the kegel as long as you can for at least 50 reps a day.



Precautions During Pregnancy

KNOW YOUR LIMITS

You don't want to over do it when exercising while pregnant. Keep aware of how your body reacts during exercise. If at anytime you have any of the following symptoms during exercise, stop right away and see your doctor:

- **Dizziness** – Dizziness and blurred vision can be due to a shortness of breath or even could be a symptom of anemia. This can affect your pregnancy and should be taken care of right away.
- **Nausea** – After a workout, you could experience a build up of lactic acid in your stomach. This may cause you to feel sick after a workout. The more this lactic acid build up lessens once your body adapts to the workouts.
- **Sweating** – Sweating extreme amounts during exercise can be a problem while you are pregnant. This could be due to you pushing yourself too hard. Make sure to keep track of your heart rate and keep it below 140. You want to be able to keep a steady conversation with someone.

- **Temperature change** – If you are having hot and cold flashes while exercising, your body is trying to tell you it can't regulate your temperature. This can be trouble for a developing baby, so it is advised to stop exercise immediately. The beginning signs of these rapid temperature changes is clammy hands.
- **Swelling** – Your hand, feet, and ankles will swell up shortly after exercise. If these areas swell more than usual, keep an eye out.
- **Vaginal Bleeding** – Some women will see light spotting during their pregnancy, but make sure to pay close attention if there is bleeding. During your 2nd and 3rd trimesters, bleeding could be related to premature labor.
- **Abdominal Pain** – A sharp recurring pain in the abdomen could mean you are having contractions. Avoid exercising with these pains are happening.
- **Fainting** – If there is ever any fainting, you are not getting enough oxygen to your brain. This can only tell you that your baby is not getting enough oxygen either. Fainting during anytime of the pregnancy, if its during exercise or not, should not be taken lightly. Being dehydrated could be the answer or it could be circulatory problems.

Exercises You Should Avoid During Pregnancy

There are some exercises that you will not want to do during pregnancy. Any of these mentioned can put the baby at harm. Anything which might put you at risk of falling should be avoided at all times. These could include:

- x Bicycling
- x Tennis
- x Water skiing
- x Horseback riding
- x Snowboarding
- x Skiing
- x Surfing
- x Basketball

The activities to avoid are pretty straight forward. Also avoid any exercise where you could drop a weight on your stomach. You might also want to remember your balance may be a little off because your center of gravity has changed. Most experts agree the risk for the activity depends on how far along you are in your pregnancy, how hard you go, and how fit you are.

Exercising during pregnancy is recommended in most cases but there are times when you shouldn't exercise. Once again, contact your doctor before beginning any exercise program especially when you are pregnant. If you suffer from any of the conditions below, you may be prohibited from exercising:

- Heart disease
- Lung disease
- Multiple babies (twins or more could increase preterm labor)
- Frequent bleeding from the vagina during months 4-9 of pregnancy
- Placenta previa (this could block the babies exit from the uterus)
- Hypertension

YOGA DURING PREGNANCY



Yoga is another great form of exercise to be done during pregnancy. It has great benefits for keeping flexible, improve your balance and circulation, tones your muscles, and helps you control your breathing. It is not very stressful on the body either.

There are many prenatal yoga classes popping up around the globe now. It is getting more and more popular not just for the health benefits, but you get a chance to meet other women going through the same thing you are.

If you are just starting yoga, you should definitely find a teacher who is experienced in prenatal yoga and let them know that you are pregnant. Begin by paying close attention to your breathing and relaxation. Avoid yoga positions which require you to lie on your back. You don't want to prevent blood flow to the uterus and possible hurt the baby.

Yoga may become difficult to do during your 3rd trimester. Your balance and center of gravity may be way off. Your movements are also very limited due to how large the baby will be. Use the wall or a chair to help with your balance during this time. You don't need to hold you poses for a long time and yoga is no different when it comes to hydration. Drink plenty of water.

Here are some yoga poses that safe for you to perform during pregnancy:

- Butterfly stretch
- Cat-Cow
- Seated forward bend
- Side angle pose
- Standing forward bend
- Triangle pose

Avoid these poses while you are pregnant:

- Back bends
- Balancing poses on one leg
- Camel
- Handstands

- Headstands
- Upward bow



Nutrition During Pregnancy

Your diet during pregnancy is one of the most important aspects of this time in your life. It is essential to get the right amounts of nutrients so that your baby develops the best it possibly can. You need to begin thinking about what you eat as soon as you become pregnant or even as soon as you decide you want to have a baby. Start early learning the importance of vitamins and minerals.

Good nutrition should be a priority. During pregnancy, you will experience wild cravings and consider eating massive loads of junk food. Even though at this time of your life it's okay to do that, try and think about the consequences of taking this too far. The more extra weight you add on during pregnancy, the more you will have to lose after delivery. There are guidelines you should follow throughout your entire diet during pregnancy. Eat balanced meals, drink lots of water, cut out caffeine, and don't skip meals.

Try and eat a well balanced diet throughout your pregnancy. You should be eating at least 300 extra calories a day for the baby. In the earlier stages, vomiting and nausea may make this difficult but focus on getting enough food. Here are

some more recommendations for healthy eating during pregnancy:

- Eat foods with lots of fiber in them. These foods can be whole-grain breads, pasta, rice, fruits, cereals, and vegetables.
- Getting all your vitamins and minerals is very important during pregnancy. Take a supplemental vitamin designed for prenatal nutrition to help this. Your doctor will be able to give you a good over the counter option.
- Calcium is a must during this time. The developing baby requires a lot of calcium. If you don't eat enough of it, your body will use the calcium in your bones. This can lead to osteoporosis. To get enough calcium, eat or drink at least 4 servings of dairy products per day. This should put you in the recommended 1000-1300 mg of calcium range.
- Eat at least 3 servings of iron rich foods per day. Iron is also very important and you should be taking in over 27 mg per day.
- Choose foods with high contents of folic acid in them. This is very important for the baby's brain and spine development. You can find folic acid in dark green leafy vegetables and legumes. To prevent spina bifida in the developing baby, you have to consume 0.4 mg of folic acid every day.
- Eat at least one food high in Vitamin C and Vitamin A. These vitamins can be found in many fruits and vegetables. Keep in mind taking in excessive amounts of Vitamin A can lead to fetal malformation. This only is a problem when eating huge amounts of Vitamin A.

There are many times during this stage of your life when getting the right nutrition during pregnancy is going to be tough. The effects pregnancy has on your body can cause it hard to keep food down or even make you too sick to eat at all. Even though you are experiencing these things, you still have to get plenty of food.

This is very important for you and your baby.

Common problems related to nutrition during pregnancy are morning sickness, diarrhea, heart burn, and constipation. There are certain foods and practices that you can use to help avoid these pregnancy ailments.

Morning sickness happens early on in the pregnancy and usually will eventually quit farther along. Some women have reported having morning sickness throughout their whole pregnancies though. You can combat morning sickness by eating plain light foods. Saltine crackers, pretzels, and cereal are good examples of this. Try and avoid fatty, greasy, and fried foods. They can make your stomach uneasy. Also try and avoid large heavy meals.

To avoid diarrhea, you will want to increase your intake of fiber. Two very important forms of fiber that can help with this problem are pectin and gum. These sources of fiber will help absorb water and decrease the chance of having diarrhea. You can find these substances in bananas, apple sauce, wheat breads, and oatmeal.

Constipation is a common problem during pregnancy because the digestive system slows down. This causes more build up of gases. To avoid this problem, start drinking more glasses of water. 6-8 glasses a day is recommended. You can also eat more fruits and vegetables.

You can eliminate heart burn by eating smaller meals throughout the day. This keeps the digestive system working throughout the day also allowing food to move throughout the digestive tract. Another great tip to get rid of heart burn is to drink a glass of milk before an actual meal. Stay away from caffeinated drinks as well. They can aggravate heart burn.

Your diet during pregnancy isn't just for you. It's what your baby depends on to grow and develop. Not only will eating a healthy diet help the baby, it will also make you feel better. Talk with your physician about what essential nutrients you

need.

Conclusion and a Little About the Author

I hope you enjoyed this report on fitness during pregnancy. You're probably wondering why in the world should I listen to this guy. Well, my name is Travis Petelle. I've always been a huge enthusiast for fitness and nutrition. This started at a young age and is the reason I chose the path I did in life. I've worked in the fitness industry for nearly 10 years now. Within that time, I've been able to help hundreds of people achieve their fitness and health goals.

I first got involved with assisting pregnant women have a easier and healthier pregnancy in college. During this time, I held weekly seminars for pregnant women to learn more about healthy nutrition and the reason why they should be exercising. After doing this for a few years, I graduated from Auburn University with a degree in Biomedical Sciences and another degree in Nutritional Science.

Since that time, I have worked as a personal trainer and nutritionist. Last year, I created a fitness and nutrition company called [Go Healthy Fitness](#). I hope to help all of you achieve a happy pregnancy. I know I can help you just as I've helped all those that have come to me before.

Pregnancy is a special time. Take care of yourself and your baby. If you ever have any questions about fitness or nutrition, feel free to contact me through any of these:

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Good Luck!!!