



# Your Exercise

Take 5 tips

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Health Net

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## Benefits of exercise

There are many special benefits of physical activity during pregnancy:

- Exercise can ease and prevent aches and pains of pregnancy, including constipation, varicose veins, backaches, and exhaustion.
- Active women seem to be better prepared for labor and delivery, and recover more quickly.
- Exercise may lower the risk of pre-eclampsia and gestational diabetes during pregnancy.
- Fit women have an easier time getting back to a healthy weight after delivery.
- Regular exercise may improve sleep during pregnancy.

- Staying active can protect your emotional health. Pregnant women who exercise seem to have better self-esteem and a lower risk of depression and anxiety.



- Results from a recent, large study suggest that women who are physically active during pregnancy may lower their chances of preterm delivery.

## Types of exercise

Be careful when choosing a sport.



Avoid any activities that put you at high risk for injury, such as horseback riding or downhill skiing. Stay away from sports in

which you could get hit in the belly, such as ice hockey, kickboxing or soccer. Especially after the third month, avoid exercises that require you to lie flat on your back. Lying on your back can restrict the flow of blood to the

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uterus and endanger your baby. Finally, never scuba dive. This sport may lead to dangerous gas bubbles in the baby's circulatory system.

Low-impact activities at a moderate level of effort are safe, comfortable and enjoyable for many.

The demands on the pregnant body can cause a pregnant woman to fatigue faster while exercising. Pay attention to your body and how you feel, and stop exercising when you get tired, dizzy or short of breath. If you have any serious problems, such as vaginal bleeding, headaches, chest pain, decreased fetal movement or contractions, contact your doctor immediately.

- Brisk walking for 30 minutes or more is an excellent and economical way to get the aerobic benefits of exercise.
- Swimming is a sport that is especially good for pregnant women. The water supports the weight of your growing body and provides resistance that helps bring your heart rate up and provides increased levels of fitness.
- Aerobics and yoga classes specifically designed for pregnant women.
- Dancing and cycling (stationary is safest) are examples of safe low-impact aerobic activities.