

Exercises

During Pregnancy:

Kegel's: Strengthen Pelvic Floor Muscles → *To find these muscles, stop the flow of urine when you urinate.*

- **Before the 4th month:** Lie on your back with your arms next to your side and bend your knees while keeping your soles flat on the floor. Squeeze the muscles around your vagina and anus for about 5-10 seconds. Then, slowly let them relax. Do them 10-20 times in a row, at least three times each day.
- **After the 4th month:** Do not lie on your back. Stand or sit and squeeze those same muscles. Do them 10-20 times in a row, at least three times each day.

Pelvic Tilt's: Strengthen Abdominal Muscles and Relieve Backache →

- **Before the 4th month:** Lie on your back on the floor. Press the small of your back against the floor while you let out your breath. Relax your spine while you take in a deep breath. Repeat this five times, twice per day.
- **After the 4th month:** Do not lie on your back. Stand against a wall. Press your back next to the wall while you let out your breath. Then relax your spine while you take a deep breath. Repeat this five times, twice per day.

Angry Cat: Takes the Weight of Your Uterus Off Your Spine →

- Get on your hands and knees and make your back flat.
- Keep your head and neck straight.
- Arch up your back like an angry cat. Pull in your tummy muscles, and hold for 3 seconds.
- Relax. Make your back flat again.
- Do this five to six times each day.

Postpartum Exercises:

Ask your healthcare provider prior to doing more advanced exercise

- **Kegel's and Pelvic Tilt's**
- **Yoga**
- **Workouts you can do with your baby** → *Some require infant to be able to hold his/her head up*
 - ❑ **Baby Dancing** - Can be done while baby is in a carrier or starting to stand up with assistance. Put on some music and keep that heart rate elevated. Make movements large and animated and maintain eye contact with your infant.
 - ❑ **Curl-Ups** - Lie on your back and bend your knees while keeping your soles flat on the floor. Set your infant in a seating position on your pubic bone, facing you. While holding infant, lift your head, neck, and shoulder blades off the floor and curl up towards infant. Smile and maintain eye contact. Try 15-20 reps, rest and play, and repeat one more set.
 - ❑ **Reverse Baby Curl** - Lie on your back and bring your knees toward your chest, while baby rests on your shins in the superman position. Do 15-20 reps, rest and play, and repeat one more set.
 - ❑ **Baby Overhead Press** - Sit cross-legged, holding your baby in front of your chest with your elbows bent. Then, try to straighten your arms upward without locking your elbows. Pause, then lower your baby to the starting position. Do 10 reps, rest and play, then repeat 2 more sets.
 - ❑ **Baby Bench Press** - Lie on your back and bend your knees while keeping your soles flat on the floor. Hold your infant in the superman position and bench press them. When lifting them up, contract your abdominal muscles, and bring your shoulder blades together when bringing them to your chest. Do 10 reps, rest and play, then do 2 more sets.
 - ❑ **Baby Plies** - With baby in a carrier, stand with your feet farther than hip-width apart, turning your feet out slightly. Keeps abs drawn in and bend your knees, lowering your hips and pressing your weight into the heels. Slowly straighten your legs and squeeze your buttocks to return to standing. Try doing plies for two minutes.
 - ❑ **Baby Walking Lunges** - With baby in a carrier, stand tall and look straight ahead. Take a large step forward with your right leg and bend both knees 90 degrees. Keep your front knee over your ankle as your back knee approaches the floor with heel lifted. Push off the back leg and step your

feet together. Repeat with the opposite leg. Try doing lunges for two minutes.

- ❑ **Baby Leg Tilt's** - Lie on your side with your baby next to you laying on their back. Maintain eye contact with your baby and lift your right leg upwards as far as you are able to, hold for 5 seconds, then slowly bring leg back down. Try 10 reps, rest and play, then repeat with your left leg.
- ❑ **Baby Tummy Time** - While your baby is doing tummy time, lie next to them on your tummy. Pretend you are an airplane and lift your arms, legs, and chest off the ground and hold for 10 seconds. Try to do 10 reps.

Nutrition

During Pregnancy:

- Drink 6-10 (8 ounce) glasses of liquid per day.
- Prenatal vitamins
- Iron-rich foods → *spinach, lentils, meats, kidney beans, oatmeal, eggs, cashews, and berries.*
- 2 - 2.5 cups of fruit daily
- 3 - 3.5 cups of vegetables daily
- 6 - 10 ounces of grains daily → *bread, pasta, cereal, crackers, popcorn, and granola.*
- 6 - 7 ounces of protein daily → *meats, eggs, beans, and nuts.*
- 3 cups of dairy per day → *milk, cheese, pudding, yogurt, and cottage cheese*
- Limit seafood intake to 12 ounces per week and select items low in mercury → *cod, haddock, shrimp, tilapia, and chunk light tuna.*
- Limit caffeine intake to 1 cup per day and avoid alcohol at all times.

Postpartum Nutrition:

- Hydration
- If you are breastfeeding, increase your caloric intake by 500 kcal per day.
- Make sure you are getting high amounts of *calcium, iron, and DHA (omega-3 fatty acids).*

- DHA-rich foods → *Fish oil and fatty fish (salmon, tuna, and halibut).*
- Limit alcohol and caffeine intake to one glass per day.

Sleep

- ❖ Good sleep hygiene is key. Make it a priority.
- ❖ Exercise regularly.
- ❖ Take a warm bath or shower before bed
- ❖ Limit caffeine intake, especially in the afternoon
- ❖ Try “Two nights on” and “Two nights off.” OR Split nighttime baby duty.
- ❖ Be patient until your infant has a schedule.
- ❖ Try Meditation.
- ❖ Ask for help!