

# Exercise in Pregnancy



If you haven't seen a health care provider yet, the information below may be helpful while you wait for your first visit. This is general information and it does not take the place of medical advice from a doctor, nurse, registered dietitian/nutritionist (RD/RDN) or behavioral medicine specialist.

Exercising is an important way to keep your blood sugar (glucose) under control. Exercise helps your body "use" blood sugar. Try to exercise at least once a day. Walking is one of the best exercises for pregnant individuals. Walking for 20 minutes after each meal will help lower your blood sugar. Following are some recommendations for exercise during pregnancy.

Appropriate exercises for pregnant people with diabetes:

- Walking
- Swimming
- Low impact aerobics
- Stepping machine (including elliptical)
- Bicycling
- Dancing
- Light weight training
- Treadmill walking
- Water aerobics
- Bench stepping (step aerobics)
- Stair stepping
- Stationary bicycling
- Yoga

Recommendations for exercise success:

- Exercise with a partner whenever possible
- Wear supportive clothing
- Carefully select footwear for optimal fit and comfort
- Avoid exercise in hot or humid weather
- Drink plenty of water
- Set realistic goals
- Schedule exercise into your day

Strength training recommendations\*:

- Perform all exercises with good posture and proper technique
- Start with light weights
- Use slow and controlled movements: 2 seconds lifting and 2-4 seconds lowering
- Never hold your breath
- Breathe out during each lifting movement and breathe in during each lowering movement
- Add more repetitions as each exercise becomes easier
- Increase weight only when an exercise becomes very easy
- Perform strength exercises every other day
- Stop at any signs of discomfort

You can find more information on diabetes and pregnancy at [Gestational Diabetes and Postpartum Care](#).

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\* Weight size depends on the mother's level of fitness. Beginners should use 1-3 lb. weights. Those who have some level of fitness should use 3.5 – 5 lb. weights.