

# Pointers For Mothers-To-Be

## Stay Fit During Pregnancy

(NAPSA)—A world of benefits to you and your growing baby is at your feet...if, doctors say, you move those feet. Regular, moderate exercise—favorites include walking and water aerobics—can help reduce the risk of developing gestational diabetes for some women; lessen pregnancy-related woes such as backache, bloating and constipation; increase energy; and improve mood.

“Even women who weren’t exercising before becoming pregnant can start an exercise program,” said Elizabeth Battaglino Cahill, RN, executive director of the National Women’s Health Resource Center (NWHRC), long a trusted source for women’s health information. “The key if you fall into this category is to check with your health care professional to ensure there are no medical reasons to avoid exercise.”

### Exercise Ideas

Some simple guidelines for exercising while pregnant include:

- Aim for 30 minutes of mild to moderate physical activity most days of the week. Women who have been inactive should start off slowly, with just a few minutes a day, and add five minutes a week until reaching the 30-minute level. Be sure to warm up, cool down and stretch.

- Moderate strength training helps your muscles and is safe for women who were doing such training before becoming pregnant.

- If you weren’t exercising regularly before your pregnancy, low-impact exercises are probably best. Walking, riding a stationary bicycle, using an elliptical machine, swimming or taking a water aerobics class can be great ways to get active.

- After the first trimester,



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don’t do exercises for which you must lie on your back.

- Exercise in the cooler parts of the day to protect yourself from overheating.

- Drink plenty of fluids.

“While exercise is good, women should avoid contact sports or those that require them to jump, change direction quickly or have a higher risk of falling,” added Battaglino Cahill, naming soccer, basketball, tennis, skiing and horseback riding as examples.

### More Tips

You can find more tips from the National Women’s Health Resource Center on staying fit and healthy during pregnancy in the Pregnancy & Parenting Health Center at [www.healthyywomen.org](http://www.healthyywomen.org).

### Free Planner

You also can order a free, easy-to-read Pregnancy Planner from NWHRC to help plan for each trimester, track checkups and take other notes and be prepared for baby to come home.