

Stay 'FITT' During Pregnancy

being pregnant does not mean the end of your exercise routines. Studies by the American College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology (ACOG) indicate that there is no need for healthy women (without pregnancy complications) to limit their exercises for the fear of adverse effects. The benefits of properly designed exercises not only improve your overall fitness level, but also help to reduce pregnancy-related problems such as back pain and constipation.

ACOG recommends the following guidelines when exercising during pregnancy. You will need to make adjustment to your exercises according to your overall comfort level and condition during the different stages of pregnancy.



Frequency At least 3 times a week

Intensity

- Mild to moderate
- Avoid over-exertion (stop exercising when feeling fatigue)
- Exercise should allow comfortable, normal breathing (do not hold your breath)

Time Minimum 20 minutes per session

Type

Low impact to non-weight bearing exercises.
Eg. walking, cycling, swimming or water aerobics



Strengthening exercises.
Eg. pelvic floor exercises, upper arm exercises or lifting light weights (less than 2.5kg)



Stretching exercises.
Eg. calf stretch or inner thigh stretch



If you do not have a regular exercise routine and plan to start one during your pregnancy, you are encouraged to seek your doctor's advice and begin with low-intensity and non-impact activities.

You should discontinue your exercises and seek medical help if you experience/have:

- Excessive breathlessness, fatigue, palpitations or chest pains
- Persistent contractions (more than 6 to 8 times per hour)
- Unexplained abdominal pain
- Persistent and severe headache, visual disturbance or dizziness
- Blood in your vaginal discharge
- 'Gush' of fluid from the vagina
- Persistent elevation of heart rate or blood pressure after exercise
- Sudden swelling of ankles, hands or face
- Swelling, pain and redness in calf of one leg
- Gained less than 1kg per month over the last 2 trimesters

Antenatal care and Parentcraft programmes are available at NUH. For appointments and enquiries, please call 6772 2255 or 2277 during office hours.