

Special Topics

Pregnancy

○ Congratulations!

Nothing compares with the miracle of pregnancy. Planning ahead can increase your chances of well-being and having a healthy baby. Pregnancy is a natural, healthy body state and staying healthy includes exercise. We recommend you tell your doctor about what you've been doing and get his/her support before you engage in any exercise program.

In most cases, if you were exercising before you became pregnant, have a low-risk pregnancy, and have no physical or medical problems, there's no reason you shouldn't be able to continue.

Our bodies need exercise to function at their best, pregnant or not. In his guide, "*Your Pregnancy™: Fitness and Exercise*," Dr. Glade B. Curtis lists some of the many benefits of exercising during pregnancy. These include:

- Relieving backache.
- Weight and sleep management
- Quicker recovery time
- Lowering risk of gestational diabetes and pregnancy-induced hypertension
- Preventing constipation and varicose veins
- Strengthening muscles used in delivery
- Lessening fatigue and stress and controlling mood swings

Additional studies show that exercising while pregnant can also provide potential long-term benefits to your child as well. Dr. Linda May's research reports that mother's exercise appears to be beneficial to the baby with a lowered heart rate and improved cardiovascular system to decrease the risk of cardiovascular disease. Once you get the support of your doctor, let's review your **Curves Workout**.

- **Make sure your heart rate does not exceed 140 beats per minute.** Monitor your speed on the double positive machines to manage your intensity level on the machines. The recovery stepper will display your heart rate, or your Curves coach can show you how to calculate your pulse to keep you in a healthy training zone.
- **Modify your movement on the equipment and during stretching as needed.** As your baby grows, your range of motion on some machines may need to be modified. In fact, some machines might need to be skipped during the third trimester. Don't push yourself beyond your comfort level. It is very important to 'listen to your body' as it adapts to changes.
- **Continue walking!** We recommend that all Curves members walk on most days of the week, with a goal of 10,000 steps a day.

While exercise is essential during any phase of life, nothing is more important to us than the health of you and your baby. Following your doctor's advice and making the appropriate exercise modifications will allow you to have the safest, healthiest pregnancy possible and ensure the best outcome for you and your child. And after your bundle of joy has arrived, your Curves staff will be waiting to help you get back in shape and get the most out of your "30 minutes of *me* time!"

