

References

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Jefferson County Public Health

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Postpartum Exercises



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For more information or to make an appointment

Lakewood Clinic 303-239-7078

Call for an Appointment 645 Parfet Street Lakewood, CO 80215

Arvada Clinic 303-275-7500

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Benefits of Exercise After Pregnancy

When you are caring for a newborn, finding time for physical activity can be challenging, however there are benefits to exercising after pregnancy. Consult your health care provider to find out how soon you can begin exercising after your delivery. It can:

- Promote weight loss
- Improve cardiovascular fitness
- Restore muscle strength and condition your abdominal muscles
- Boost your energy level
- Improve your mood and relieve stress
- Help prevent and promote recovery from postpartum depression

Postpartum Exercises will not hinder breastfeeding your baby.



Exercise Goals and Tips

Most healthy women should get 150 minutes of aerobic activity a week after pregnancy. (That is almost 22 minutes a day.) Here are a few tips to keep in mind:

- Take time to warm up and cool down
- Begin slowly and increase your pace gradually
- Avoid excessive fatigue
- Wear a supportive bra
- Stop exercising if you feel pain or have bright red vaginal bleeding heavier than your period
- Seek medical help or go the ER with increased vaginal bleeding

Kegel Exercises

Kegel exercises can be done during pregnancy and after to help prevent urinary incontinence. They may also be helpful for women who have difficulty reaching an orgasm.

• How to do Kegel Exercises-

Find the right muscles. (Your pelvic floor muscles.) Stop urination mid stream. If you succeed, you found them!

Perfect your technique-

Lie on your back. Tighten your pelvic floor muscles and hold for five seconds. Then relax for five seconds. Try it for five times in a row. Work up to keeping your muscles contracted for 10 seconds with 10 seconds between exercises.

• Maintain your focus-

Focus on tightening your pelvic floor muscles only. Try not to tighten your abdominal or buttocks muscles. Avoid holding your breath. Breathe freely during your exercises.

• Repeat 3 times a day-

Don't make it a habit to do Kegel Exercises during urination. This can actually weaken your bladder as well as lead to incomplete emptying of the bladder, which can increase the risk of a urinary tract infection.

If done correctly, Kegel Exercises can reduce frequent urinary leakage within a few months.

If you are having trouble doing Kegel Exercises, don't be afraid to ask your health care provider for help.

Other Exercises

When you are ready to exercise, start with something simple. Take a daily walk or a lap round the pool. With your health care provider's approval, here are a few other exercises you might consider:

• Bridge Exercise

This will strengthen your core muscles. Lie on your back with your knees bent. Keep your back in a neutral position. Tighten your abdominal muscles and raise your hips off the

floor until your hips are aligned with your knees and shoulders. Hold for three deep breaths. Return to your starting position and repeat.

• Pelvic Tilt

This exercise will also help to strengthen your abdominal muscles. Lie on your back with your knees bent. Use your abdominal muscles to tilt you



pelvis up slightly. Hold for 10 seconds. Repeat 5 times and work up to 10 to 20 repetitions.