



Indiana Physical Therapy Woman
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Pre & Post Partum Therapy

What Happens During Pregnancy?

Physical changes during pregnancy may cause a woman's center of gravity to shift upward and forward. These changes affect movement and balance. Secondary to hormonal changes, ligaments become relaxed which decreases stability, affecting posture and increasing the risk of a fall or injury.

While changes such as the enlargement of your breasts and uterus are natural and expected, there are helpful interventions that can reduce the pain some women experience during pregnancy. These interventions also help in a women's recover after childbirth.

Why Exercise?

Regular exercise can improve energy levels, strength and muscle tone, sleep, and flexibility before, during, and after pregnancy. Exercise can also help prevent the onset of gestational diabetes, decrease low back pain, and it can prevent or minimize constipation. Regular exercise helps you prepare for labor and delivery, and it will help you regain your post-pregnancy body.

Breathing Techniques

Your body needs increased oxygen, especially during exercise. Use deep breathing techniques by expanding and contracting through your abdomen.



Exercise Guidelines

- Empty your bladder before you exercise. A full bladder will increase stress on an already weakened pelvic floor.
- Remember to warm up and cool down. Avoid working out too hard. Exercising too intensely can redistribute blood flow away from your uterus to the muscles you are working.
- Use the Talk/Sing Test to determine whether you are working out too hard. If you are unable to do either, you are working too hard. Slow down and rest.
- Remember to stay hydrated. Drink at least 8 oz. of water before and after and 16 oz. of water during your workout.
- Don't lie on your back for more than 5 minutes after the 20th week of your pregnancy. This decreases the blood flow to your baby.
- You should workout 3 times a week for 30-45 minutes at a time. You can start exercising even if you did not exercise prior to becoming pregnant. However, start slowly and work up to the maximum time recommended. If at anytime, you experience pain, stop immediately.
- If you are in a regular exercise program, you need an additional 500 calories per day in your diet; if you are not exercising, add 300 extra calories per day. This is important for pregnant and sedentary women.

Activities to Avoid

It is recommended that you avoid activities and sports like horseback riding, roller skating, ice skating, contact sports like basketball and soccer, racquetball, skiing, and scuba diving.



Call Your Doctor if Your Experience Any of These

- Abdominal pain
- Bleeding
- Shortness of breath
- Irregular heartbeat
- Dizziness or faintness
- Contractions
- Back pain
- Difficulty walking
- Fluid leaking from the vagina

What is Diastasis Recti?

Diastasis Recti is the separation of the recti abdominis at the midline. To test it, lay on your back. Place your fingers across the midline at your belly button. Slowly raise your head and shoulders off the floor. If there is any separation, your fingers will sink into the gap. Do not perform any abdominal exercises if this condition exists. Seek medical advice.

Why Indiana Physical Therapy Woman?

Indiana Physical Therapy Woman specializes in the treatment of women's unique diagnoses and conditions. Our physical therapists have certifications in manual therapy, strength and conditioning, and pelvic physical therapy.

Director of the clinic, Margaret Bryden, PT, WCS, COMT, CSCS, is certified in pelvic physical therapy through the APTA and is a Board Certified Woman's Clinical Specialist. This is the highest expertise a therapist can achieve in women's health.

For questions about Indiana Physical Therapy Woman or women's physical therapy, please contact Margaret Bryden at (260) 969-8992.

Indiana Physical Therapy Woman is a specialty division of Indiana Physical Therapy