

PRENATAL PILATES

Pilates can be done as intensely or as gently as the body can handle. It's also great in that it can be modified for any body type and ability. This makes it a perfect form of exercise for women during pregnancy. As the body changes, so can the Pilates exercises. During pregnancy women are generally encouraged to continue exercising at a mild to moderate level. Like any other health condition, permission should be taken from your doctor.

Some of the conditions pregnant women may experience during pregnancy:

- Low back pain. Usually due to a combination of factors – change in centre of gravity; increased lumbar lordosis.
- Loosening of ligaments resulting in increased flexibility.

Advantages of exercise during pregnancy:

- Less weight gain
- Babies are slightly smaller than babies of sedentary mothers
- Increased fitness may help mother cope with labour better.
- Helpful in the prevention of gestational diabetes
- Improved psychological well-being for the mother.

Exercise during pregnancy can also prevent varicose veins, haemorrhoids, low back pain, helps boost self esteem and helps prepare body for the physical demands of being a parent.

Things to consider when exercising:

- During the first trimester workouts may have to be adjusted around fatigue levels.
- Throughout the pregnancy demand on the abdominal muscles should be decreased.
- During the second trimester the abdominal muscles become stretched out and some women experience diastasis recti (separation of the abdominal muscles.) With the reduced abdominal support there is a greater risk of lower back injury.
- Hormonal changes during this period cause the ligaments surrounding joints to become lax leaving them loose and weaker than normal. (Increasing the susceptibility to sprains and strains. Avoid overstretching.)
- Minimize remaining in the same position for long.
- Continue strengthening and rebalancing muscles around joints supporting the body.
- After the 16th week the supine (lying on the back) position for long periods of time should be avoided.
- In the second trimester repositioning and the use of props for support can be used to make some positions more comfortable.

The pregnancy rather than childbirth has the greatest effect on the pelvic-floor muscle and about 64% of women develop incontinence symptoms during this time.

During pregnancy Pilates can help with....

- With postural alignment as the body changes.
- Lumbopelvic region (Changes in the centre of gravity and increased lordosis as pregnancy progresses. Strengthening 'core', back and abdominal muscles and pelvic floor muscles helping minimize incontinence symptoms.)
- Strengthening shoulder girdle (mid back and shoulders). Strengthening this area will only help for when the baby is born. Lifting and carrying a baby will require upper body strength.



Side leg splits on the reformer. Strengthens gluteus medius. Not all Pilates exercises are done lying down.



Oblique work. Exercises may be done sitting on the reformer both up on a box or crossed legged.

To find out more how Pilates and Pilates Patio can help you through your pregnancy, keeping health, fit and maintaining your energy level, please contact us at 613-422-3638 or lanipilatespatio.com



346 Richmond Road
Suite 205
Ottawa, ON, K2A 0E8
613-422-3638
lanipilatespatio.com
www.pilatespatio.com

