



# Exercise in Pregnancy

If you haven't seen a Sweet Success provider yet, the information below may be helpful while you wait for your first visit. This is general information and it does not take the place of medical advice from a doctor, nurse, dietitian, or behavioral medicine specialist.

Exercising is an important way to keep your blood sugar under control. Exercise helps your body "use" blood sugar. Try to exercise at least once a day. Walking is one of the best exercises for pregnant women. Walking for 20 minutes after each meal will help lower your blood sugar. Following are some recommendations for exercise during pregnancy.

Appropriate exercises for women with pregnancy complicated by diabetes:

- |   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| ❖ Walking                                 | ❖ Treadmill walking              |
| ❖ Swimming                                | ❖ Water aerobics                 |
| ❖ Low impact aerobics                     | ❖ Bench stepping (step aerobics) |
| ❖ Stepping machine (including elliptical) | ❖ Stair stepping                 |
| ❖ Bicycling                               | ❖ Stationary bicycling           |
| ❖ Dancing                                 | ❖ Yoga                           |
| ❖ Light weight training                   | ❖ Selected recreational sports   |

Recommendations for exercise success:

- ❖ Exercise with a partner whenever possible
- ❖ Wear supportive clothing
- ❖ Carefully select footwear for optimal fit and comfort
- ❖ Avoid exercise in hot or humid weather
- ❖ Drink water liberally
- ❖ Set realistic goals
- ❖ Schedule exercise (specific days and times)

Strength training recommendations\*:

- ❖ Perform all exercises with good posture and proper technique
- ❖ Start with light weights
- ❖ Use slow and controlled movements: 2 seconds lifting and 2-4 seconds lowering
- ❖ Never hold your breath
- ❖ Breathe out during each lifting movement and breathe in during each lowering movement
- ❖ Add more repetitions as each exercise becomes easier
- ❖ Increase weight only when an exercise becomes very easy
- ❖ Perform strength exercises every other day
- ❖ Stop at any signs of discomfort

\* Weight size depends on the mother's level of fitness. Beginners should use 1-3 lb. weights. Those who have some level of fitness should use 3.5 – 5 lb. weights.



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