

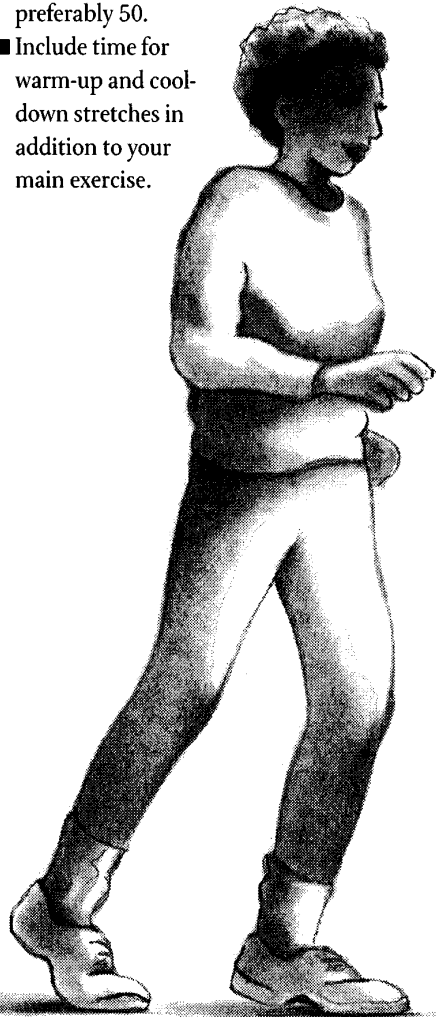


Exercise: A One-Year Plan

Remember, it's going to take your body up to one year to return to your prepregnancy strength and stamina. Before you begin any kind of exercise program, talk with your doctor. Focus on low-impact exercises and include plenty of stretching. You can gradually build up to more strenuous exercises.

Set Realistic Goals

- If you weren't active during your pregnancy, start very gradually.
- Plan to lose no more than one pound per week.
- Set a schedule of exercise three to five times per week.
- Work out for at least 30 minutes, preferably 50.
- Include time for warm-up and cool-down stretches in addition to your main exercise.



Choose Your Exercises Wisely

- The best workout you can do is some form of regular aerobic exercise.
- Focus on fast-paced movements that use large muscle groups.
- Include exercises that target muscles most affected by pregnancy: your abdominals and lower back.
- If you're having a hard time finding time to work out, bring your baby along.
- Go for a hike with your baby in a carrier strapped to your body.
- Check your local gym for child care on the premises.
- Consider home exercise equipment, such as a stationary bike, treadmill or stair stepper.
- Build a library of exercise videos.
- Always make sure your baby is safe and secure in her crib, playpen, infant seat or baby swing if you're exercising at home.

Low-Impact Exercises

- ✓ brisk walking
- ✓ swimming
- ✓ stair stepper
- ✓ cycling
- ✓ low-impact aerobics

More Strenuous Exercises

- ✓ cross-country skiing
- ✓ golfing
- ✓ bowling
- ✓ jogging
- ✓ racket sports
- ✓ strength training

AVOID:

- exercising right before nursing your baby. Your breasts will be fuller and larger, which will create more chance of soreness. Your baby may also shun the breast milk for up to an hour after you exercise.
- exercises that make your breasts feel more sore or tender.
- exercise that's so strenuous you can't have a normal conversation. This is a sign you're overdoing it.
- exercising if you begin bleeding again or more heavily. Stop and call your doctor.
- cutting back on calories if you're breastfeeding. Instead, reduce your fat and sugar intake.

DO:

- Wear a supportive workout bra, or wear two comfortable bras for extra support.
- Begin with low-impact exercises, and work up to more strenuous ones.
- Remember to eat healthily. Include whole grains, fruits, vegetables and protein in your daily diet.
- Drink plenty of water.