

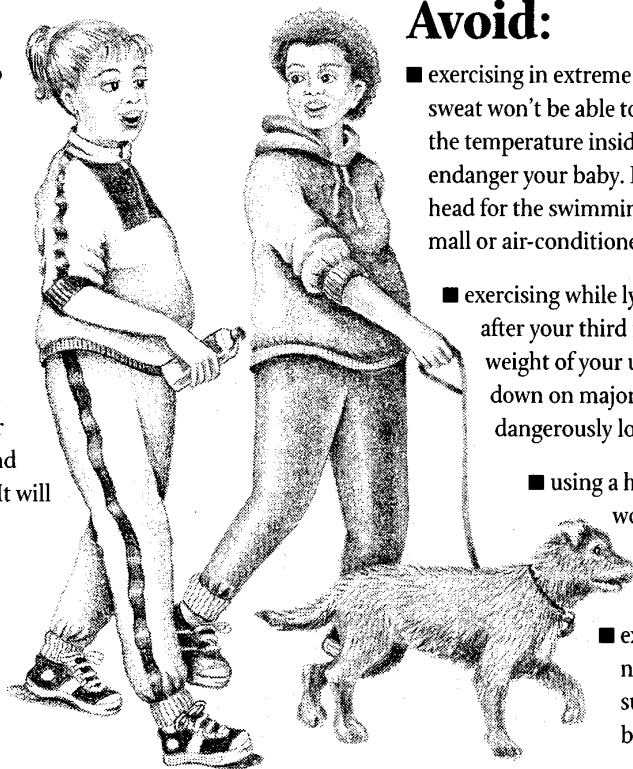


# Pregnancy and Exercise

Exercise throughout your pregnancy is important. It can relieve discomfort and make delivery more comfortable. It's important to remember that your body and your energy level are different when you're pregnant.

## Do:

- Give yourself 10 minutes to warm up and cool down. It will take longer for your heart rate to climb and return to normal.
- Special prenatal exercise classes are often available through hospitals and community centers.
- Wear an athletic bra. You'll need extra support for your breasts, which are larger and more tender than normal. It will make exercising more comfortable and help your breasts keep their shape.
- If you feel very tired, dizzy or nauseous, stop exercising. You're exercising to boost your energy, not to wear yourself out.
- Drink plenty of water. Dehydration can be a big danger during exercise. Drink two glasses of water an hour before, one glass halfway through and another when you're done exercising.



## Avoid:

- exercising in extreme heat or humidity. Even a good sweat won't be able to cool your body enough. If the temperature inside your body rises, it can endanger your baby. During hot or humid weather, head for the swimming pool or take a walk in the mall or air-conditioned gym.
- exercising while lying on your back anytime after your third month of pregnancy. The weight of your uterus and the baby can press down on major blood vessels and dangerously lower your blood pressure.
- using a hot tub or sauna following a workout. This can raise your internal body temperature, endangering your baby.
- exercises that use your nonpregnant center of gravity, such as anything that requires balance.
- exercising if you're short of breath. You should be able to carry on a conversation even at the peak of an exercise session. If you can't, or you're gasping and panting, slow down. You're working too hard.
- exercises that put stress on your joints, which are more easily stretched out during pregnancy.

### LOW-RISK EXERCISES

- brisk walking
- low-impact aerobics
- stationary cycling
- swimming or water aerobics

### MEDIUM-RISK EXERCISES

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

### HIGH-RISK EXERCISES

- downhill skiing
- scuba diving
- sail boarding
- surfing
- water skiing
- horseback riding