

## PREGNANCY



Healthy pregnant women, with no contraindications, are encouraged to maintain physical activity throughout their pregnancy. A daily regimen of 20-30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise is recommended.

Pilates offers a safe and effective option for expecting mothers, particularly if they were active participants prior to pregnancy. However, in cases of high-risk pregnancies or those induced by fertility treatments, it's advisable to take a three-month hiatus during the first trimester, resuming only with approval from a healthcare provider.

Pregnancy is a period of continual bodily changes as the baby develops. Each woman's experience is unique, and her capabilities may vary from month to month. It's important to establish open communication with the client, allowing them to express any discomfort or concerns. Modifications to exercises

should be made as necessary:

- pacing should be adjusted to accommodate their changing needs.
- Avoiding exercises that involve overhead movements or compromise balance, such as Front Splits, is essential for safety.
- Utilizing supportive equipment, such as springs, can provide stability during Pilates sessions. The focus should be on maintaining strength and flexibility rather than intensifying abdominal workouts, particularly the rectus abdominis, which is already under strain from the growing uterus. Side Lying exercises are well-suited for pregnancy, as they allow the obliques to be engaged without undue pressure on the abdomen.
- After the 16-20-week mark, prolonged periods of lying on the back should be avoided to prevent compression of the mother's organs and arteries. Alternating between supine, seated, and side lying positions can help alleviate discomfort and ensure adequate blood flow.
- Additionally, it's important to remind pregnant clients to stay hydrated throughout the session to prevent dehydration, a common concern during pregnancy.

### Pregnancy Guidelines At A Glance:

- Avoid exercises that may lead to a loss of balance or an increased risk of falling and contact sports.
- Hot Pilates or hot yoga should be avoided due to the risk of overheating, which can be harmful to the fetus.
- After 16-20 weeks, it's best to refrain from prolonged supine (on the back) exercises as this position may affect blood flow to the uterus.
- Always modify other exercises based on the individual's
  - ability and comfort during different stages of pregnancy: *prone position; excessive opening in Side Splits if pelvic pain is present; too much abdominal work, especially if Diastasis Recti is present (crunches are not proven to cause Diastasis, but if Diastasis is present best to avoid them)*
  - Fitness level
  - Beliefs