

SPINNING® AND YOUR PREGNANCY

Taking Spinning classes during your pregnancy is safe, as long as you follow certain precautions and your doctor's advice.

In the absence of special circumstances, exercise in pregnancy presents minimal risks with proven benefits to both mother and baby. Most women can continue their exercise program with a few modifications. It is also safe to begin a program after you have become pregnant. In either case, it is necessary to check with your obstetrician or midwife prior to exercising while pregnant.

The goal of exercise in pregnancy is to stay fit or, if just starting out, to make positive lifestyle changes to benefit you and your baby. Pregnancy is not a time to participate in intensive training. Moderation is key.

Current Guidelines

According to the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, the following guidelines should be observed:

- Regular, moderate intensity exercise sessions are best.
- Stretching, stationary cycling, swimming and walking are good choices.
- Do not exercise lying on your back after the fourth month (e.g., no supine crunches).
- Five-minute periods of warm-up and cool-down stretching are recommended, but do not stretch to the point of maximum resistance.
- Women with sedentary lifestyles prior to pregnancy should begin with short term (20-30 minute) sessions and gradually increase.
- Stop exercising if you become fatigued.

- Consult your doctor or midwife if you experience any unusual symptoms.

- Avoid excessive heat and humidity when you exercise.

Spinning as an Exercise Choice

The Spinning program was cited in a study by Dr. Herman Falsetti as an excellent form of exercise during pregnancy due to the ease of bike adjustment on the Spinner® and the ability of the participant to monitor their exertion. Additionally, Dr. Raul Artal recommends limiting workout sessions in pregnancy to 45 minutes or less to avoid a drop in blood sugar that is more dramatic during pregnancy. Lastly, Spinning does not require balance as with outdoor cycling and group exercise classes like aerobics and step. So, the typical Spinning class fits the criteria of a safe exercise choice.

Safety Tips for Spinning Class

Here are some tips for a safe prenatal training session:

- **Modify your intensity.** Most experts agree that mild to moderate intensity is best. Dr. Falsetti states that, "Pregnant women should always wear heart rate monitors and keep their heart rate 20 beats below anaerobic threshold." It is also important to use a rate of perceived exertion chart because if a woman is exercising 20 beats below AT, but feels like she is going to pass out, she should back off immediately. At 20 beats below AT, you may feel like you can do more, and during

pre-pregnancy it would have been fine to go for it, but in the interest of thermoregulation and safety, pushing it is a poor choice in pregnancy.

- **Hydrate generously.** A good rule of thumb is to drink enough water throughout the day to keep your urine clear to pale yellow. Drink frequently during class as well to help to cool your body.
- **Stay cool.** With indoor exercise, ventilation and light clothing are

Continuing Spinning classes on a regular basis while pregnant presents minimal risks while enhancing well-being to mother and baby.

essential to aid in heat dissipation.

- **Adjust bike set-up.** As your body continues to change, you may need to raise the handle bars and make additional adjustments to the saddle in order to remain comfortable.
- **Avoid out-of-the-saddle movements.** The growth of the abdomen will create changes in the center of gravity drawing it forward, which may lead to undue stress on the knees because of the increase in weight and joint laxity associated with pregnancy.
- **Take frequent postural breaks.** Lower back discomfort is common in pregnancy. Sit up tall in the saddle with arms down by your sides to give your back relief from time to time during class.

To order a heart rate monitor, or for more information on Spinning safety, log onto www.spinning.com.

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