

WHY EXERCISE?

By Tricia Streit Perez, MS, ATC, LAT

IT'S GOOD FOR YOUR HEART!

- **INACTIVE WOMEN HAVE A 48% GREATER RISK OF HEART DISEASE THAN ACTIVE WOMEN.**

IT'S GOOD FOR YOUR MIND!

- Exercise helps stabilize your moods during pregnancy.
- Exercise increases confidence in your changing body image and decreases feelings of apprehension about labor and delivery.
- Exercising women experience fewer incidences of postpartum depression.

GREAT SKIN!

- Working out reduces stress, which in turn helps balance your hormones and raise your level of endorphins - both of which can make your skin more radiant and less acne-prone.
- A good workout increases blood flow, which stimulates cell turnover and collagen production, and helps carry waste products away from the skin.

YOU'LL FEEL GOOD ALL OVER!

- Mothers-to-be who exercise experience less lower-back pain and depression than their sedentary counterparts.
- Women who exercise during pregnancy experience fewer prenatal discomforts such as: constipation, swelling of the extremities, nausea, leg cramps, varicose veins, insomnia, fatigue, back pain, and incontinence.
- Women who exercise throughout their pregnancies return to activities of normal daily life 40% faster than less active women.
- Moms who maintain or improve their activity level after having a baby report being better off than women who didn't exercise or who dropped in their fitness level.
- Medical studies have concluded that moms in a stroller-walking group were more fit and less depressed than those in a regular support group.

IMPROVE YOUR QUALITY OF PREGNANCY AND BIRTH!

- Physical activity during pregnancy reduces the incidence of gestational diabetes by half, and the risk of pre-eclampsia by 35%.
- Sedentary women are 4.5 times more likely to have a Cesarean delivery than active women.
- Women who continue weight-bearing exercise throughout pregnancy experience less problematic deliveries (75% decrease in the need for forceps or C-section, 75% decrease in maternal exhaustion, 50% decrease in the need for Pitocin, and a 50% decrease in the need to intervene due to fetal heart-rate abnormalities).
- Exercising women have been shown to have active labor that was 30% shorter than control groups.

Pregnant and post-partum women should get 30 minutes or more of moderate exercise on most days of the week

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