

Best Start Resource Centre  
Prenatal Education Program

# Physical & Emotional Fitness



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# Pregnancy and Stress





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# Good Stress / Bad Stress



- Recognizing triggers
- Using coping skills
- Short-term stress can be beneficial

# Pregnancy Stress

- Physical discomforts
- Hormonal changes
- Health of mother & baby
- Coping with labour & delivery
- Becoming a parent
- Changing relationships
- Financial concerns



# More Than Mood Swings

- Most of the time within the two last weeks...
  - Have you been sad, depressed or irritable?
  - Have you been unable to enjoy the things you used to enjoy?
  - Have you felt anxious, worried or panicky?
  - Have you cried more easily?
- Have you experienced any recent losses or stressful life events?
- Do you have a history of depression, anxiety or other mental health challenge?



# Strategies for Coping

- Determine the source of stress
- Eat healthy, be physically active regularly, get enough sleep
- Ensure you have a reliable support network





# Strategies for Coping



# Let's Get Active!

- Head Rolling
- Alternate Arm Stretches



# Let's Get Active!



- Sitting Pelvic Tilts
- Standing Hamstring Stretch
- Ankle Circles



# Pregnant and Active



# Benefits of Active Living



- Less stress
- More energy
- More oxygen for your baby
- Better posture
- A healthy weight gain
- Less risk of developing pregnancy-related diabetes or high blood pressure
- An easier recovery after birth

# Physical Activity Guidelines

- Discuss with your health care provider
- If already active, continue 30 min X 3-4/week, moderate intensity
- If inactive, start in 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester and build gradually
- Pelvic floor exercises (Kegel)
- Warm up before and stretch after
- Modify routine as needed
- Drink and eat enough





# Tips for Exercising Safely

- Avoid activities where you could fall or injure yourself
- Don't exercise on your back after 4 months.
- Pay attention to your body.



# Knowing When to STOP

- Dizziness or fainting.
- Blurred vision.
- Excessive shortness of breath.
- Chest pain.
- Abnormally high heart rate that does not drop when the activity is stopped.
- Pain or edema in the calves.
- Sudden swelling of hands, face, or feet.
- Sudden change in body temperature.
- Strong, sharp pain in the pubis, back, abdomen, or chest.
- Painful uterine contractions.
- Vaginal bleeding.
- Any gush of fluid from the vagina.



# Physical Activity & Pregnancy Video





# Relaxation



# For More Information

- Health care provider
- Public health department
- PARmed-X for Pregnancy - [www.csep.ca](http://www.csep.ca)
- Local fitness centres
- Prenatal fitness programs
- Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada  
- [www.sogc.org](http://www.sogc.org)
- Dad Central – [www.dadcentral.ca](http://www.dadcentral.ca)

The information represents the  
best practice guidelines at the time of publication.  
The content is not officially endorsed by the Government of Ontario.  
Consult your health care provider for information specific to your pregnancy.



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[www.beststart.org](http://www.beststart.org)

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