



The Bare Vitality
Studio

♥ PREGNANCY
MOVEMENT GUIDE



The BareVitality Studio

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What you
need to
know:

Congratulations on your pregnancy!

I am typing this while currently pregnant with my second and after having worked as a pre & post natal exercise professional for 9 years.

Pregnancy is a beautiful time however it certainly comes with a toll on our body.

Pregnancy safe movement can help us manage discomfort, maintain & build strength, assist with circulation, reduce pregnancy complications, assist bonding with our growing Bub, help balance our mental health, assist greater ease of labour & postnatal recovery + more..

It can also be overwhelming to know what you can and can't do while pregnant and the best way to keep yourself and bub healthy.

So this guide is to simplify pregnancy movement for you and provide a frame work to follow for a holistically healthy pregnancy movement program.

First of all however make sure you gain clearance from your health professional. There are health conditions during pregnancy where certain exercise could cause more harm than good. It is also important to keep your doctor up to date with any new symptoms during your pregnancy.

A prenatal physiotherapist visit is also a helpful addition to understand and support your changing body & a must postnatally for a safe return to exercise.

I also encourage you to always look and feel inwards. Every body and each pregnancy is so different and from day to day you may need to adapt with how you are feeling. At any point if something does not feel right or is uncomfortable, just stop or ease back. Only you know your body best.

Movement should be a beautiful, respecting relationship between you and your body. Dive in and feel its magic while honouring its time and place during this chapter.

As part of a pregnancy holistic movement program I recommend keeping with our usual balance of The BareVitality Studio format;

- Cardio Move days
- Strength/ Resistance Training days
- Yoga/ Restorative days

In our 'Movement Library' you will find a range of specially designed and selected Pregnancy Safe Workouts, Movement Sessions & Yoga/ Restorative Practices under 'Pregnancy'.

Your Cardio Move days may be a walk, swim or stationary cycle.

If you were regularly running prior to pregnancy, running may feel ok for some of your pregnancy. This is something we do suggest working with a prenatal physiotherapist along the journey so they can provide support and guidance.

During all trimesters make sure you stay cool and hydrated. Take little sips of water during your workout and hydrate sufficiently afterwards.

Its also important to make sure your blood sugars are stable. A small, easy to digest snack 30 minutes before a workout is ideal. I often suggest a piece of fruit. Then a meal or snack afterwards to refuel.

Remember less is always more. This is not a time to have fitness goals and be pushing your body. Rather a time to nourish, connect inwards and be using movement to complement a healthy, happy and safe pregnancy.

The below guide works by starting at the first trimester & adding on from there. So if you are already in your third trimester, make sure you still read trimester 1 & 2 to include the outlined precautions.

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First Trimester:

First Trimester can be for some the easiest trimester and for others the most challenging.

Know that it is OK to not do anything other than rest during first trimester if that is what your body is telling you.

With first trimester often our energy is very low and we may be feeling nauseous. Fresh air does help so at the least aim for a light little walk each day to assist with energy, nausea, circulation and your spirits.

From a safety point, here are the first trimester precautions. First T is also when your pregnancy is most fragile.

First Trimester pregnancy precautions:

- Avoid all activities/sports that have a risk of falling or abdominal impact. For example, skiing, soccer, outdoor cycling, contact sports etc..
- Avoid any activities that will cause over heating. Outdoor movement on a hot day or in a hot room, hot yoga. Choose cool times of the day and cooler environments.
- Avoid jerking, jumping, high impact activities. Eg. High impact boxing, burpees, skipping etc..
- Keep to slow, low impact abdominal exercises only. Avoid disturbing the womb.
- Avoid any abdominal twisting exercises and movements.

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Second Trimester:

Second Trimester you should start to feel a little more energy and less nausea - yay!

You will however start to develop new symptoms with your growing bump that requires greater adaptations to exercise for comfort and safety.

The body will be producing relaxin, a pregnancy hormone responsible for softening the musculoskeletal system.

Relaxin assists the body to both carry a little growing human and then with the expansion for birth.

Relaxin can however cause greater instability in your muscles, tendons and ligaments. This can result in new niggles and pains + greater flexibility without muscular skeletal support, making you more susceptible to injury.

Second trimester you will also start to feel to weight of the front body placing strain on the back body. Good posture, stretching and continuing strength exercises for your upper body (particularly your back muscles) will assist this transition.

This is also the time we have to start being aware of protecting our rectus abdominals from diastasis rectus (abdominal separation) and protecting our pelvic floor from pelvic prolapse (drop of the uterus and cervix down the vaginal canal, causing many long term complications).

Aim to contract your transverse abdominals during all movement and daily activities. You can do this by visualising you are wrapping your deep core muscles around your torso like a corset and inwards, belly button to spine.

Keep the pelvic floor strong by practising routine kegal exercises (see our pelvic floor workout under 'Pregnancy' on the movement page), correct bracing and avoiding unnecessary weight bearing pressure on the area.

Circulation is now another focus. Daily movement is so important, even if it is just a walk around the block.

From a safety point, here are the second trimester precautions.

Second Trimester pregnancy precautions:

All the First Trimester precautions above +:

- Only go to 70-80% of your stretching capacity.
- Reduce your stride length while walking.
- Reduce or avoid asymmetrical exercises if experiencing any pelvic pain.
- Limit exercises placing strain and weight on the wrists.
- Stop all abdominal exercises that work the rectus abdominals (the front of the tummy) such as sit ups, crunches and any exercise that creates coning (tissue bulging out the midline of stomach).
- Incorporate pelvic floor exercises to strengthen and maintain your pelvic floor health.
- Avoid weights over the head and reduce the the weight you lift. Always brace core and pelvic floor for any lift.
- Avoid lying on your back, instead an upright or side position after 16 weeks.
- Avoid positions where your weight is placed on the front abdominals. This includes a plank position or alike.
- Keeping your head above your heart will reduce dizziness.
- Ensure you can speak at least 3 word sentences at all times. This is the easiest way to track your heart rate is in a safe zone.

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Third
Trimester:

Home stretch! Welcome to third trimester.

Third trimester can feel so different for each person. Your body is probably feeling the distributed weight change and the daily aches may have upped.

Be kind to yourself and still try to keep moving a little each day for comfort and wellbeing.

From a holistic point of view, third trimester is a time to slow down and conserve our energy for birth and the postpartum period.

Think more yoga, low intensity strength and walking if this feels good for you.

From a safety point, here are the third trimester precautions.

Third Trimester pregnancy precautions:

All the First & Second Trimester precautions above +:

- Limit the blocks of time standing on your feet to reduce swelling.
- Avoid compressing torso & bump. Give Bub as much room as you can.
- Slow down movements further.

Have fun moving!

We always love updates on your pregnancy journey so do tag us in any of your movement sessions [@thebarevitalitystudio](https://www.instagram.com/thebarevitalitystudio)