Title: Aerobic exercise in pregnancy

Author: Tam Huynh, MS3

Date: March 31, 2010

Key words: Pregnancy, Aerobic, exercise

Abstract: This pamphlet discusses aerobic exercise during pregnancy. Non-contact aerobic exercises that are done 2-3 times a week improve the mother physical fitness. There is not enough data to determine if there are adverse/beneficial effects on fetal outcome.

This document was created by a medical student enrolled in the Primary Care Clerkship at the University of Minnesota Medical School as part of the course project. The aim of the project is to present information on a medical topic in the format of a patient education handout. It does not necessarily reflect the views of the University of Minnesota Medical School physicians and faculty. These materials are provided for informational purposes only and are in no way intended to take the place of the advice and recommendations of your personal health care provider. The information provided may no longer be up to date since it has not been reviewed since the date of creation. The information provided should not be used to diagnose a health problem or disease, or as a means of determining treatment. In the event of a medical emergency, immediately contact a doctor or call 911.
Benefits of Aerobic Exercising During Pregnancy

- **Feel better**
  1. relieve backaches, improve posture
  2. reduce constipation
  3. help you sleep better by relieving stress and anxiety

- **Look better**
  1. increases blood flow to skin

- **Prepare you and your body for birth**
  1. Strong muscles and fit heart can ease labor and delivery
  2. Help manage pain

- **Regain your pre-pregnancy body earlier**
  1. Gain less fat weight

Some Exercises that you can do

- **Swimming**
- **yoga**
- **biking**

- **water aerobic**
- **pilates**
- **walking**
Some Exercises that you should AVOID that includes:

- bouncing
- jarring (anything that would cause a lot of up and down movement)
- leaping
- a sudden change of direction
- a risk of abdominal injury

And check with your doctor if you experience any of these warning signs during any type of exercise:

- vaginal bleeding
- unusual pain
- dizziness or lightheadedness
- unusual shortness of breath
- racing heartbeat or chest pain
- fluid leaking from your vagina
- uterine contractions
Getting Started

Always talk to your doctor before beginning any exercise program. Once you're ready to get going:

- Start gradually. Even 5 minutes a day is a good start if you've been inactive. Add 5 minutes each week until you reach 30 minutes.
- Dress comfortably in loose-fitting clothes and wear a supportive bra to protect your breasts.
- Drink plenty of water to avoid overheating and dehydration.
- Skip your exercises if you're sick.
- Opt for a walk in an air-conditioned mall on hot, humid days.
- Above all, listen to your body.

**Developed by**: Tam Huynh  
University of Minnesota  
Primary Care Clerkship  
Patient Education Tool

**Images courtesy of**: [http://www.clipartguide.com](http://www.clipartguide.com)

**Citation**: Kramer MS, McDonald SW. Aerobic exercise for women during pregnancy. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* 2006, Issue 3. Art. No.: CD000180. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD000180.pub2.