

Being active with a bump.

Let's bust the myths

"It's dangerous to exercise when you're pregnant. It's not good for the baby."

Myth

Truth

Keeping active is important. Light to moderate exercise is usually safe and really good for mums-to-be and their babies. Being active can help control weight gain and it can help you feel less tired too.

"You've never exercised before? Don't start now."

Myth

Truth

Now is the perfect time to start – both you and your baby will really benefit from you being active. There's no need to start training like an athlete: a daily walk to the shops does you good. With any activity, you can burn calories, control weight gain and brighten your day.

"Exercise affects your breast milk."

Myth

Truth

There's no evidence that moderate daily activity has any effect on your ability to produce breast milk or how your baby grows.

Help your baby be born healthy

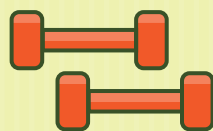
For more information and support about being active during pregnancy, contact your midwife, GP or visit FitForMe.info

6 steps to strong muscles

Your pelvic floor is the broad sling of muscles that go from your pubic bone to the base of your spine.

Pregnancy puts stress on your pelvic floor muscles. Pelvic floor exercises help with bladder control before and after your baby is born.

1. Sit, stand or lie in a comfortable position
2. Gently squeeze and lift your pelvic floor muscles
3. Hold this contraction for 5-10 seconds, then relax for a few seconds
4. Repeat ten times
5. For best results, do three or four sets of ten contractions every day
6. Remember, this is about pulling your muscles in gently, not straining or creating a lot of tension



When mums-to-be feel good so do their babies



Baby Steps
Little changes make a big difference



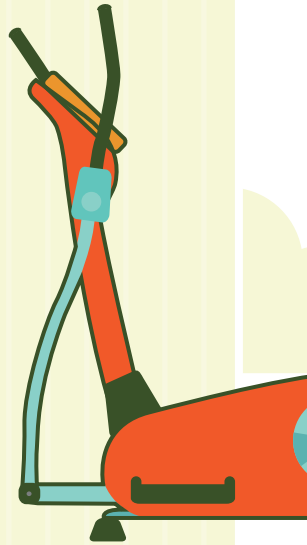
Liverpool City Council

Why it's good

to get active

Stay on the move and enjoy big benefits for you and your baby. Being active pumps blood round your body and gives your baby an oxygen boost. Walking, swimming, pregnancy yoga, dancing around your living room – whatever you do – will play a part in keeping you and your baby feeling relaxed, happy and healthy.

Why not join a local class for mums-to-be? They're a great way to get active and meet new friends at the same time. Keeping active is also a great stress buster as well as helping reduce your risk of swollen ankles and varicose veins.



Being active can help

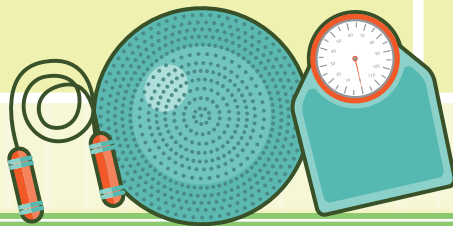
you to sleep better

Benefits for baby:

- A healthier heart
- Gives your baby an oxygen boost

Benefits for you:

- Gives you an energy boost
- Helps prepare your body for birth
- Means you're less likely to gain extra weight during pregnancy



Being active is safe for you and your baby

What would you

like to know?

Q Why do people keep telling me to put my feet up when I'm feeling fine?

A It's important to take time for yourself and pregnancy is a positive life event, so it's a myth that mums-to-be should be treated as if they're ill! As long as you feel well and comfortable there are plenty of good reasons for you to stay active during pregnancy.

Q I can't afford a gym membership. Got any ideas?

A You don't need fancy equipment or paid classes to keep active. A walk every day is one of the best ways to boost your mood and stay a healthy weight throughout your pregnancy.

Be in better shape for giving birth

Being active when you're pregnant is safe for your baby. Studies show that, as an active mum-to-be, you will be less likely to have problems in later pregnancy and labour. You don't have to do anything fancy or sporty. If you're not active already, a 10-15 minute walk is a great start. You should then aim to build up to a 30 minute walk most days.

Q I've heard about the ante-natal exercise course Mamafit. What is it?

A If you live in Liverpool, Mamafit is a free exercise programme that is specially designed for mums-to-be. Once your baby is born and you're feeling up to it, there are post-natal classes too. The gentle routines help prepare your body for giving birth. And it's a good excuse to get out of the house, get active and meet new friends.

If you live outside Liverpool, speak to your midwife to find out what's available where you live.

Q When should I stop exercising?

A Keep up your normal daily activity or exercise (walking, dancing, pregnancy yoga, swimming) for as long as you feel comfortable. Don't over-do it though. A little exercise should leave you feeling upbeat and energised, not washed out.

Have a chat with your midwife, health visitor or GP if you have any questions about staying active during pregnancy.

4 simple tips to staying active

- 1 If you're not used to regular exercise, take it easy.
- 2 Warm up carefully before exercise and cool down after.
- 3 Stay hydrated; drink plenty of water.
- 4 You might like to try swimming. It's a great form of exercise for mums-to-be. The water supports your weight, easing the back strain you may feel in later stages.

