

ANTENATAL EXERCISES

The logo of Galgotias University is a stylized, circular emblem. It features a central blue shape that resembles a flame or a drop, surrounded by a yellow and orange ring, and an outer pinkish-red ring. The overall design is modern and abstract.

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INTRODUCTION :

Being pregnant doesn't mean stopping exercises. On the contrary, exercises do wonders during pregnancy.

It helps to preparation for childbirth by strengthening your muscles and building endurance. Moreover, it helps getting your body back in shape, once the baby is born.

Of course, not every form of sport or exercise is safe to do, but many forms are. Most women will benefit, as long as they are not advised against exercise (e.g. due to medical condition) by the doctor).

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Benefits of antenatal exercises:

Regular exercises can be beneficial as it helps you to relax and makes you feel better. The main benefits include:

1. Improved circulation for mother and baby.
2. Reduction in aches and pains of pregnancy e.g. backache, cramps etc.
3. Improved stamina, giving you more energy to cope with growing demands of pregnancy.
4. Improved posture and body awareness.
5. More controlled weight gain.

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6. Improved sleeping patterns.
7. Reduction in minor ailments of pregnancy such as: stiffness, tension, constipation, sleeplessness.
8. Increased circulation minimizing varicose veins and swelling.
9. Enhanced psychological wellbeing.
10. A beneficial effect on the course and outcome of labor.

Some points to keep in mind before starting with exercises:

1. If the mother have always been active, she can probably continue her exercise regime while being pregnant, providing pregnancy isn't considered high risk.
2. Check with the doctor to make sure the activities are right for mother . The doctor can give some helpful tips for getting started.

- 3. Wear loose fitting, breathable clothing and supportive shoes:** avoid overheating body while exercising. Just layer of clothes so that they are easy to remove or wear outfits specially designed for exercise. She may also need athletic shoes that fit her feet properly. If the shoe size has changed because of mild swelling, buy a new comfortable pair.
- 4. Warm up before exercising:** always warm up muscles and joints to prepare body for exercise.

exercises

5. **Keep moving:** standing motionless for long stretches can decrease blood flow to the uterus and blood pools in legs, making the mother feel dizzy. So keep moving- change positions or walk in place.

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6. Avoid overdoing it: don't "go for the burn" and don't exercise to the exhaustion. A good rule of thumb is to slow down if she can't comfortably carry on the conversation.

7. If she feel uncomfortable or have pain, stop immediately: listen to the body. When something hurts, something's wrong, so stop. She should feel like you are working your body, not punishing it.

8. Drink lots of water before, during, and after exercising: if the mother don't drink plenty of fluids, she can get dehydrated. Try drinking two glasses of water two hours before she begin exercising.

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9. Get up from the floor slowly and carefully: centre of gravity shifts during pregnancy. That's why she should take great care when she shifts positions. Getting up quickly can make her dizzy, and cause her to lose her footing and fall.

10. Avoid outdoor activities when it's hot and humid: take it easy when it's too hot. On particularly hot and humid days, give workout a miss or exercise indoors in a well-ventilated room.

11. Cool down: walk in place for a few minutes or stretch. It gives the heart a chance to return gradually to its normal rate.

Recommended exercises during pregnancy:

The following exercises are fairly safe for expectant mothers, although some of them may not work for you during the last few months of your pregnancy. To be safe, consult your doctor before embarking on any of these activities.

- 1. Walking:** it is one of the best exercises for the pregnant women. Walking keeps you fit without jarring your knees and ankles. It is safe through out the nine months and can be built into your day to day schedule.

1. Jogging / running: going for the jog is the quickest and most efficient way to work heart and body. She can tailor it to her schedule-running 15 minutes one day when that's all she can fit in then 30 minutes the next when she have time.

2. Swimming: fitness experts hail swimming as the best and the safest exercise for the pregnant women. It is ideal because it exercises both large muscle groups (arms and legs), provides good cardiovascular benefits, and allows pregnant women to feel weightless despite the extra weight of pregnancy

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Walking



Swimming

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Yoga and stretches



4. Yoga and stretches: they can help maintaining muscle tone and keep body flexible with little if any impact on joints. Be careful not to overdo the stretching. Don't hold the stretches for too long or try to develop flexibility too much.

5. Pilates: Pilates are the form of exercises which combines flexibility and strength training with body awareness, breathing and relaxation. The exercises are based on certain movement pattern performed with the tummy and pelvic floor muscles-known in Pilates as “stable core” or base.

6. Pelvic floor exercise: the pelvic floor muscles forms the base of the pelvis. When strong and working properly they play an important role in helping prevent stress incontinence, (so when we laugh, cough, sneeze or lift something up no urine or stool accidentally escapes), and in preventing prolapse, (where the uterus slips down into the vagina).

Exercising pelvic floor muscles during the pregnancy is beneficial when giving birth, as toned muscles will be easier to relax and control .

Exercises to avoid:

- Diving
- Water skiing
- Gymnastics
- Netball
- Hockey
- Horse riding
- Cycling
- Rock climbing

The logo of Galgotias University is a stylized 'G' composed of three curved, overlapping bands in shades of yellow, blue, and pink. Below the logo, the text 'GALGOTIAS UNIVERSITY' is written in a large, light grey, serif font.

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Benefits of exercise

Reduces the risk of developing and/or dying from heart disease, diabetes, colon cancer and breast cancer.

Reduces high blood pressure or the risk of developing high blood pressure, high cholesterol or the risk of developing high cholesterol.

Reduces body weight or body fat, depression and anxiety, improves psychological well-being and sleep quality.
Builds and maintains healthy muscles, bones, and joints.

When beginning exercise it is important to consider the following:
Wear loose supportive clothing and strong supportive footwear; shorts, t-shirt and a sturdy sports bra are ideal.

Environment: Exercise in a stable environment i.e. a gym or park, not on uneven ground. Avoid exercising in the middle of the day when the sun is at its hottest.

Nutrition: Do not exercise on a full stomach; eat a small meal two to three hours prior to exercise. Hydrate adequately – ensure you drink one to two glasses of water half an hour before exercise and several glasses afterwards.

Low impact exercise is preferable for the first six months after having a baby.

Principles of exercise

Frequency – the Health Department and National Heart Foundation currently recommend exercising on most if not all days of the week. As you commence your exercise program, start with one to two days a week and gradually build up to most days of the week.

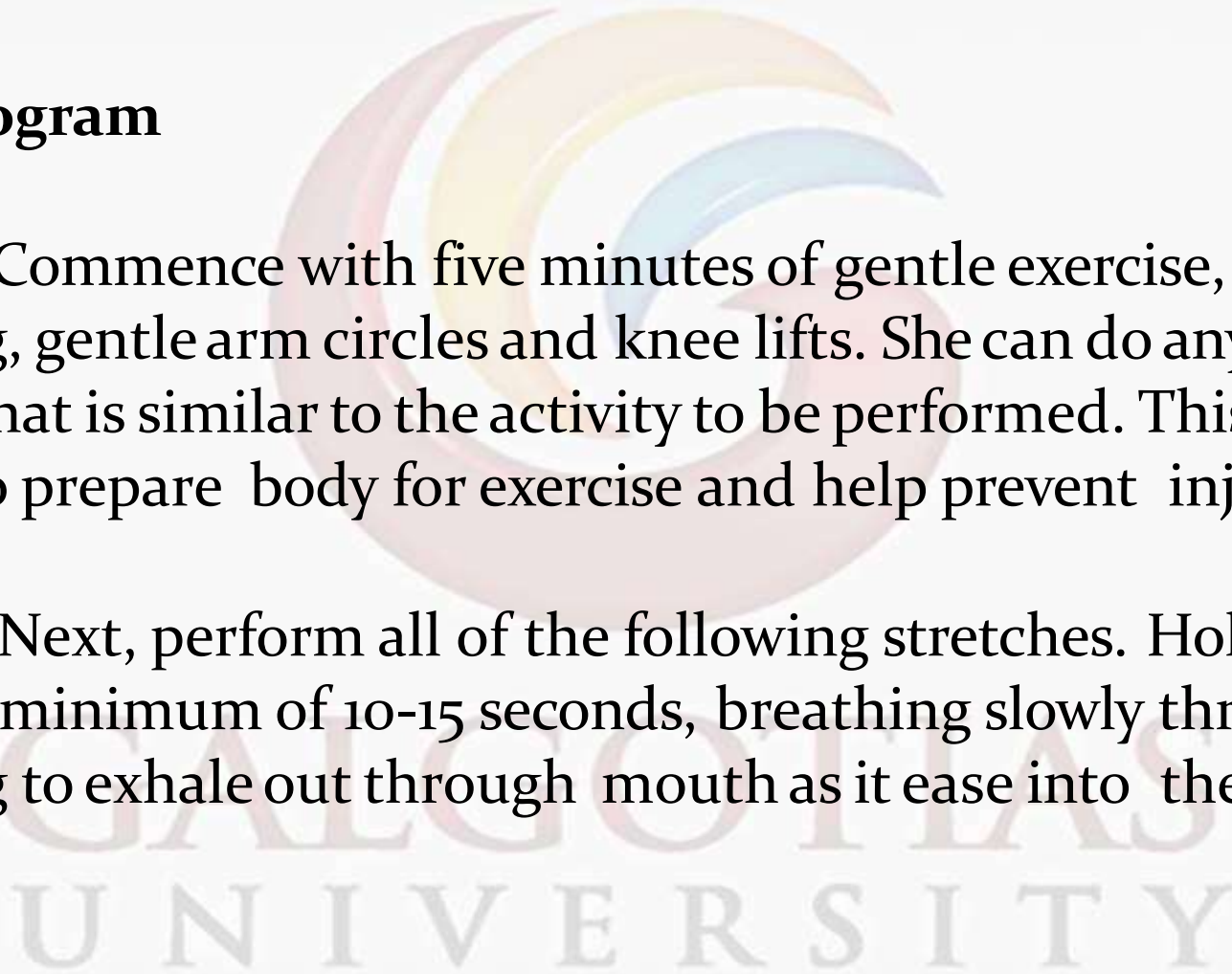
Intensity – Aim to achieve three to five sessions of light to moderate exercise – this equates to feeling slightly breathless, but still able to hold a conversation. When she feel she is coping well with light to moderate exercise add in one to two sessions of moderate to vigorous activity

Duration – Current guidelines recommend 30 minutes of exercise per day to maintain good health.

Exercise program

Warm up – Commence with five minutes of gentle exercise, such as slow walking, gentle arm circles and knee lifts. She can do any gentle movement that is similar to the activity to be performed. This is very important to prepare body for exercise and help prevent injuries.

Stretches – Next, perform all of the following stretches. Hold each stretch for a minimum of 10-15 seconds, breathing slowly through nose, aiming to exhale out through mouth as it ease into the stretch.



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