

# Pregnancy guidelines

Congratulations on your pregnancy lovely! I'm so pleased you've chosen to do Pilates with me! First things first, please know that you are a strong, capable woman and choosing to exercise before, during and after your pregnancy is one of the best things you can do for yourself and your baby.

Exercise during this time has so many benefits for both you and your baby that roll into after the birth. And great news! Pilates is awesome for you right now!!

If you are healthy and your pregnancy is without complications, then this is also a wonderful time to begin exercising! It is perfectly safe to continue or start regular physical activity. It is of course always important to discuss any exercise program with your ob-gyn and allow them to give you the 'ok' to exercise.

If you're new to exercise, you may like to ease yourself into this way of moving gently. Start slowly and gradually increase your frequency. If you were active before pregnancy, you can continue doing the same workouts with your ob-gyn's approval.

I know there are a lot of opinions surrounding what should and should not be done during pregnancy, which is why I follow the guidelines from [The American College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists](#). You can click this link that will go directly to their website for your reference.

First things first..

## **How often should you exercise?**

Ideally, at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity each week. An aerobic activity is one in which you move large muscles of the body (like those in the legs and arms) in a rhythmic way.. aka.. Pilates!!

Moderate intensity means you are moving enough to raise your heart rate and start sweating. You still can talk normally, but you cannot sing.

The ACOG guidelines suggest dividing the 150 minutes into 30-minute workouts on 5 days of the week or into smaller 10-minute workouts throughout each day.

### **Pregnancy friendly classes**

The Core Effect has a 'Pregnancy Friendly' category to support you through your pregnancy, where I take you through classes that will follow each of the guidelines listed below. Having said this, once you're familiar with the below guidelines, please don't feel restricted to the pregnancy friendly category. As long as you keep the guidelines in mind and use your sound judgement, you will be able to make any class suit you.

The research from ACOG is comprehensive and easy to digest, so let's take a look at their guidelines:

#### **1. Avoid supine from 20 weeks**

Ab curls during pregnancy are perfectly safe for you. This simply means that from 20 weeks we're going to prop you up to keep you off your back. This can be done with a yoga bolster or yoga cushion, or a couple of firm cushions from around the home. When laying in a flat position on your back for lengthened periods of time, your uterus presses on a large vein that returns blood to the heart. This position may cause your blood pressure to decrease for a short time.

If you feel more comfortable propping yourself up earlier than 20 weeks, this is completely your choice to do so. We all have different bodies and not every pregnancy is the same, so please do what feels best for you.

#### **2. Avoid isometric holds**

This just means that we're going to avoid holding you in any position without moving for longer than a couple of seconds. Remaining motionless can also cause your blood pressure to drop.

#### **3. Avoid fall risks**

Just for arguments sake, let's not balance on the Pilates ball on one foot during your pregnancy. This guideline is fairly simple, because we want you to feel comfortable and well balanced and avoid falling over, possibly onto your tummy.

#### **4. Stay cool and hydrated**

Let's stay comfy! Grab that drink bottle and wear loose fitting clothing. This guideline is simply asking you to avoid hot Pilates or hot yoga or anything where the core of your body becomes intensely overheated. Moderate intensity exercise and raising your heart rate where you start sweating is A-OK ladies! Please just make sure you set up your mat in a well ventilated room.

Let's get you moving and feeling amazing! Xx

Reference: [The American College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists](#)