

## PREGNANCY FACT SHEET

Exercise during your pregnancy can be a very beneficial experience if you are conscious of the precautions to take and knowledgeable about the effects that exercise can have on you and your developing baby. The guidelines and limitations for exercise should start as soon as you know you are pregnant, or begin trying to become pregnant. If you have any specific questions or concerns, please ask your instructor, doctor or midwife.

## THINGS YOU SHOULD CONSIDER DURING YOUR WORKOUT

1. **Wear light clothing**, fitted if possible so our instructors can keep an eye on your body alignment and **wear a firm supportive bra**.
2. **Drink plenty of fluids and stay cool**. Avoid overheating and high-intensity exercise. Position yourself near the aircon in class where possible. Your growing baby does not have the same ability to dissipate heat as you do. Consequently, if you get overheated when you are exercising, the baby may be put at risk. This is especially important during the first trimester, when the most important growth, cell reproduction and formation is occurring.
3. **Bring snacks** to prevent a drop in blood sugar levels (eat a carbohydrate 2 hours prior to exercise)
4. **Change positions regularly** when exercising, **avoiding lying on your back for extended periods of time in your 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester**. If you begin to feel at all dizzy or light-headed, turn onto your left side and rest. Exercising on your back could cause a reduction of blood flow to your heart and head, causing you to feel faint and light-headed. More importantly, the blood flow to the placenta and baby can decrease.
5. Watch for an increase in heart rate and blood pressure changes and notify the studio or instructor if need be.
6. About 30% of pregnant women will experience a separation of the rectus abdominis during pregnancy. **Avoid loaded abdominal flexion from 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester onwards (eg. Sit ups)**
7. Perform regular, gentle pelvic floor exercises as recommended by your pelvic health specialist.
8. **Stretch gently**. The hormone relaxin is increased in your body during pregnancy. This hormone causes increased joint laxity, which may make you more susceptible to injury. Be cautious and gentle with your stretching.
9. **STOP EXERCISE IMMEDIATELY** if at any time during your exercise session you feel very hot, faint, dizzy, short of breath, experience vaginal bleeding, have palpitations, blurred vision, disorientation, or severe or continuous headaches. It is also important to stop if you experience lower abdominal pain, tightness or cramping, back pain or pubic pain. If you experience any of these symptoms, consult your obstetrician.

## YOUR PILATES TIMELINE

- **12 weeks** – Private session #1 & continue with Reformer & Barre if okay with your instructor.
- **16 weeks** – Private session #2 & given class plan for Reformer classes. Barre with modifications okay if still recommended by instructor.
- **26 weeks** – Private session #3 & Basic Reformer & Pregnancy Class only.
- **38 weeks** – time to finish up & prepare for your new arrival.
- **6 weeks postpartum** – Doctors check up & see Pelvic Health specialist
- **10 – 12 weeks postpartum** – Postnatal private & Basic Reformer & Postnatal class to start with