

Fitness Tips

Symptoms of Over-doing-it while Exercising

By Robin Resnick, Elite Personal Fitness

When you are expecting a baby, exercise can provide many benefits to you during pregnancy, birth and recovery. However, as with anything, it is much better to exercise sensibly, with moderate fitness goals, instead of over-training. Strengthening your muscles, increasing flexibility & maintaining healthy fitness levels are all reasonable goals while expecting.

Of course, if you are a pregnant athlete, different rules apply. You will need to exercise more rigorously to maintain your fitness levels so that you can compete after you deliver your baby. If this applies to you, please work closely with your health care professionals, so that they can monitor your baby's growth & development.

For the average expectant woman, having a healthy pregnancy should be of utmost importance. When you are exercising, use the perceived rate of exertion scale to monitor your intensity. If you think you are working too hard, then you probably are. Modify your intensity so that you are not 'huffing and puffing' throughout your exercise session.

Be aware of the symptoms of over-training in an expectant woman. They include: Fatigue, pain, loss of motivation, increased susceptibility to injury & increased vulnerability to common infections.

If a mom over-trains, her baby is also affected. Exercising too strenuously can cause a reduction in nutrients and oxygen getting to the baby. This will in turn cause the baby to experience slower growth.

When a mom exerts herself too much, such as during a rigorous exercise session, the baby's movements slow down. Generally, after an exercise session, the baby should move a couple of times within the first half hour. If you notice a significant decrease in movement after exercise, it is advised that you contact your health care team to be evaluated. If this does happen, you should modify your exercise intensity & perhaps exercise less often.

While exercising while expecting can often have many benefits, your exercise program should not interfere with the main goal of having a healthy pregnancy & baby.