

How can you be more active after childbirth?








Active before?

Did you know, if you were **already active before** giving birth **returning gradually** and **building up** activity slowly has benefits for your physical and mental wellbeing?

Not active before?

Did you know, if you're **new to activity, starting gradually** and **building up** your activity levels means you too can improve your physical and mental wellbeing?

Why should you be active following childbirth?

-  Reduces depression and worries
-  Improves mood
-  Improves fitness
-  Helps to control weight and return to pre-pregnancy weight
-  Improves sleep
-  Improves tummy muscle tone and strength

How much activity is recommended?

Aim to gradually build up to 150 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity spread throughout the week.

Don't worry, you need not do it all at once and every activity counts!

Build back up to muscle strength and balance activities twice per week e.g. pushing the pram uphill, taking the stairs, carrying shopping bags, exercises with your baby, and postnatal yoga.

After your 6-8 week postnatal check

Depending on delivery, you can gradually reintroduce physical activities.

If you weren't active before, start gradually and slowly build up to moderate intensity physical activity.

If you were active before, restart gradually, building up to moderate intensity physical activity over a minimum period of 3 months.

Start pelvic floor exercises as soon as you can and continue daily.

For more information and inspiration why not use the NHS accredited Baby Buddy App?

www.babybuddyapp.co.uk/this-mum-moves

or visit

www.thismummoves.co.uk

What does it mean to be physically active?

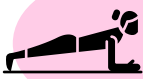
Moderate intensity activities involve any exercise that makes you breathe faster whilst still being able to hold a conversation

If you've had a straightforward birth, you can try the following activities as soon as you feel up to it:



Walking

Gentle Stretches



Deep stomach
and pelvic floor
exercises

Taking the stairs



Being active
with others

Being active
with baby



When can I start being active after childbirth?

If you've had a straightforward birth, you may start gentle activity as soon as you feel up to it, e.g. walking, gentle stretches, pelvic floor exercises and deep stomach exercises.

After the 6-8 week postnatal check and depending how you feel, moderate intensity activities can gradually resume over a minimum period of at least 3 months. After this, and in the absence of any issues, more intense activities can resume such as running.





Deep stomach and pelvic floor exercises

Regular pelvic floor and deep stomach muscle exercises can help to reduce the size of the separation between your stomach muscles. Pelvic floor muscle exercises also strengthen the muscles around your bladder, vagina and bottom. This can help to stop incontinence, improve prolapse and make sex better too.

You can visit the following websites for advice about suitable exercises or ongoing pelvic floor or diastasis recti problems:

www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/your-body-after-childbirth

www.betterbirthlincolnshire.co.uk/pre-postnatal-activity

Important safety messages

There is no evidence that being active after childbirth is harmful to healthy women. Being active is also safe for those who breastfeed their baby.

Depending on your delivery listen to your body and start gently. It is important not to do too much too soon. If you experience unusual symptoms, stop and seek advice.

Be active in your own way. Not every woman is the same. Being active with baby and others is a great way to socialise and incorporate physical activity into your lifestyle.

