



WORK WITH THE RIGHT TRAINER

These five questions can help you figure out who's the right trainer for the next nine months and who's not worth even nine minutes:

1. Have you ever trained someone who's pregnant?
2. Do you have CPR, first-aid, and pre- and postnatal certifications?
3. What's your philosophy on training someone who's pregnant?
4. Have you ever worked with a physician to make sure your training regimen is correct for pregnancy?
5. Do you have any children yourself, and did you work out while pregnant?

baby steps

for exercise during pregnancy *by Eric Butterman*

Once upon a time women were told to stay off their feet when they were pregnant. Now, not only can you be on your feet, but you might also be underneath a squat bar.

Elizabeth McCorkle, MD, an obstetrician based in Springfield, Oregon, believes most women who exercise before conception are likely to be safe to do it during pregnancy. "The reverse is also true," she admits. "Some women who have never done rigorous exercise suddenly want to go high impact because they're getting self-conscious. It's never a good idea during pregnancy to start doing what your body isn't used to."

Working Out for Two

If you do exercise regularly, consult your physician first. Then grab your workout bag and follow these exercises from Lana Taubin, personal trainer and mother of two who exercised well into her pregnancy. "Warm up and cool down more gradually than normal," says Taubin, who trains clients in Wilton, Connecticut. "Another thing is not to take too much advantage of your flexibility. Believe it or not, you're actually more limber during pregnancy, but that can lead to hyperextension if you take it too far."

One regimen Taubin suggests for pregnant women is working out on a ball. "I love the exercise ball because it can substitute for weights by using your body as the resistance." Put your head, neck, and shoulders on the ball, and walk your legs out to begin. Then move your butt up and down, focusing on the glutes and strengthening the lower back. "Especially when you're pregnant, you have to listen to what your body

can take," she adds. "Don't assume three sets and a certain amount of reps as you would usually do."

Pregnancy can make push-ups difficult, but shoulder presses help firm your upper body. With the lightest of weights, aim for 12 to 15 reps, making sure your breathing is steady throughout. "This may get more difficult as the pregnancy moves on, because your stomach muscles won't be there to help out," says Taubin. "Make sure you can keep proper form or it's wasted effort."

The Push You Need

Dr. McCorkle finds that women who work out before and during pregnancy tend to do better in labor. "Pushing takes work," she says. "A lot of those same muscles you use at the gym could come in handy during the delivery." But it's important to make rest part of your routine. "Try not to work out at night if that keeps you awake," Dr. McCorkle advises. "Rest is still important for the health of the mother and her baby." [TFL](#)