

# THE FIRST 6 WEEKS AFTER DELIVERY



*FIT4MOM® is proud to offer classes in accordance to ACOG guidelines. They are a great way to get back in shape with your baby and to meet other new moms. For more information about FIT4MOM, go to:*

**www.fit4mom.com**

## GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Begin pelvic floor rehab immediately: Kegels
- Weeks 0-2: Focus on gentle activity, begin pelvic tilts and small abdominal contractions
- Weeks 2-4: short walks, duration 5-15 minutes
- Weeks 4-6: maintain routine, don't rush progression

## RESUMING EXERCISE GOALS IN FIRST 6 WEEKS

- Rest recovery, bond with baby
- Stress management: exercise should be stress relieving not stress producing
- Focus on weight management not weight loss
- Adopt healthy lifestyle behaviors that can significantly impact health for decades
- Generally can resume exercise if uncomplicated delivery
- ACOG: "as soon as physically & medically safe"
- Physician clearance: 6 week check-up

## WITH C-SECTION DELIVERY

- Stay fit as long as possible before C-section
- Gentle movement after aids circulation, healing
- Kegels, mild abdominal exercise first few days;
  - Recovery process slower (e.g., driving, stairs)
  - Postpone jogging, weights, crunches until 6 weeks
  - Over-exertion may delay wound closure
  - Avoid bending into a forward flexed posture

## EXERCISE AND BREASTFEEDING

- Moderate exercise has no adverse affect on quantity or quality of breast milk
- Research has shown that infant growth is normal in the exercising mom;

General recommendations:

- Moderate intensity exercise
- Nurse right before exercise
- If problems with infant fussiness post exercise, feed or pump beforehand
- Drink adequate fluids during exercise
- Wipe sweat from breasts before nursing after exercise
- Never sit down to feed without water
- Baby should wet 5-6 diapers/day

## POSTURE AWARENESS

- Should not bend forward when feeding-Bring baby to you, not you to baby
- Use pillows or props to keep postural alignment
- Be cautious not to flex wrist while holding baby or nursing
- Keep moving, prolonged sitting is hard on spine

## POST-PARTUM WEIGHT AND NUTRITION

- How the weight is lost after delivery:
  - 10-13 lbs. lost at delivery
  - 11-12 lbs. during first week
  - 2-3 lbs. lost from 3-6 months
- Body composition has changed and weight is not a reliable indicator of fitness
- Healthy food intake combined with exercise is preferable
- Changes in skeletal structure can often affect clothing sizes

## BENEFITS OF POST-PARTUM EXERCISE

- Quicker return to normal routine and activities of daily life
- Improved self-esteem, self-efficacy
- Less post-partum depression
- Better time management, coping skills
- Fewer chronic aches, pains, SUI (Stress urinary incontinence)
- Increased energy



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