



THE MIGHTY MOM GUIDE TO EFFECTIVE PRENATAL EXERCISE

Feel confident that
you are doing the right
things for you and your
baby!

No More Confusion!
You CAN prepare for
labor and delivery while
reducing the risk of
complication!

Learn how to add
resistance training into
your routine in a safe
way while listening to
your body!



Mighty*Mom*

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FITNESS EXPERT, MOM OF 2



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Hi! I'm Jess.

CEO.Trainer. Badass Mama.



I'm a **FIT FOR BIRTH CORRECTIVE EXERCISE SPECIALIST, PREGNANCY & POSTPARTUM ATHLETICISM COACH** and a **CERTIFIED PERSONAL TRAINER** who has helped 100's of women in every stage of their pregnancy and postpartum recovery feel strong and confident.

Not only am I certified personal trainer, I've taken numerous specialized courses, workshops and seminars geared towards helping women reach their ultimate goals in fitness with the most effective techniques and methods available to date. I'm on a mission to clear up the confusion around **PRENATAL FITNESS** and set the record straight. **Labor is HARD WORK!** Why wouldn't you want to prepare your body for the ultimate athletic challenge?

I'm so excited to share with you all the information you need to keep you active throughout your entire pregnancy without the anxiety and stress of knowing what to do or how to modify!

Thanks so much and I hope you enjoy it!

- Jess



Let's start with a little context...

2019 Canadian Guideline for Activity Throughout Pregnancy

Published by the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) and the Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology (CSEP).

"Pregnant women should accumulate at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity each week to achieve clinically meaningful health benefits and reductions in pregnancy complications."

Sadly, only 2 out of 10 women get their recommended amount of exercise. There are many reasons as to why this is the case. There is a lack of research supported information available and most pregnant women feel confused and anxious about what they can and cannot do. **THAT STOPS TODAY! READ ON TO GET ALL THE TOOLS YOU NEED TO EXERCISE EFFECTIVELY THROUGHOUT YOUR ENTIRE PREGNANCY!**




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I know YOU KNOW that there are benefits to exercising while you are expecting. But did you know just HOW MANY benefits there truly are? For both for you and for your baby. Remember, nothing is guaranteed but you can certainly lower your risks and exposure to many prenatal complications.

- Reduced risk of complications: G. Diabetes/Preeclampsia
- Reduced risk of surgical intervention: Episiotomy/Forceps
- Decreased need for Pain Relief
- Quicker recovery
- Reduced time in labor
- Smaller, leaner babies better prepared for birth
- Delivers 5-7 days earlier
- Fewer aches and pains
- Less weight gain
- Improved mood and energy level
- Fewer fetal complications
- Improved nutrient/waste exchange to placenta
- Increased blood flow to placenta
- Increased intelligence/language scores for baby

**We now know WHY we are exercising so
let's learn how to do it effectively!**

Sources: Clapp, James F., *Exercising Through Your Pregnancy*, 2nd Edition;
Varney, Helen, *Varney's Midwifery*


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Rule #1

CORE BREATHING



Learning how to support your body as your baby grows always starts with how you BREATHE!! It is the foundation of CORE STRENGTH and the starting point in the training of your muscles to function properly. If you can learn to breathe with your diaphragm, engage and relax your pelvic floor and transverse abdominus while performing any exercise or movement, the sky is the limit in terms of prenatal fitness. Go to the next page and I'll explain...

The Anatomy

Your inner core unit provides the structure and support for your ENTIRE body. There is an ANTICIPATORY CONTRACTION that happens whenever you move any part of your body or perform an exercise. Ex. When you raise your arm over your head, your core muscles will contract slightly BEFORE this movement to provide internal support. Cool right? Let's find out which muscles are involved before we go any further.

DIAPHRAGM

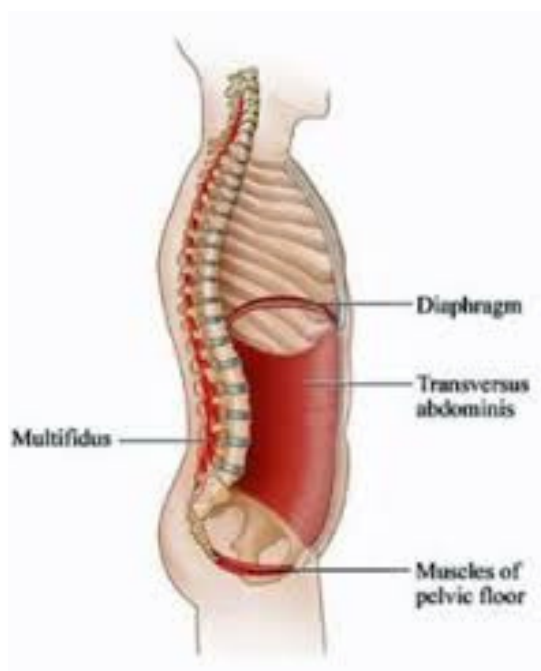
Primary Breathing Muscle – Sits like an umbrella under your ribs – Contracts DOWN when you INHALE

TRANSVERSE ABDOMINUS(TVA)

Deep Abdominal Muscle – Wraps like a corset along lower part of your trunk – provides structure and support

PELVIC FLOOR

Diamond shaped sling of muscles that connect to your pubic bone in the front and your tailbone in the back – has many functions including supporting the weight of your baby and internal organs and will help deliver your baby if you give birth vaginally



MULTIFIDUS

Deep muscles that runs along the inside of the spine – provides support and structure for your spine

Source: Fit For Birth Course and Textbook

What We Know...

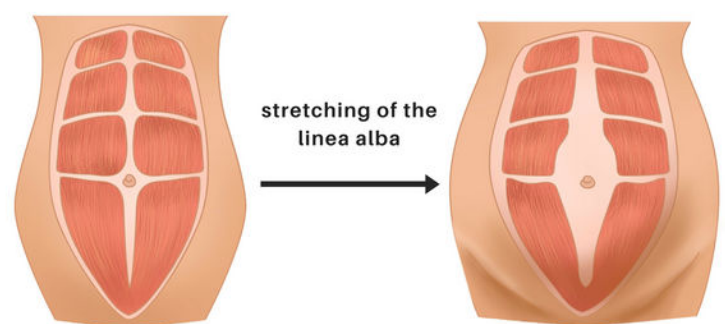
The muscles of your inner CORE (Diaphragm, Transverse Abdominus, Pelvic Floor and Multifidus) all work together as one cohesive unit. When one muscle is compromised, the whole system cannot function properly. Think about a soda can – it's super strong even when it's empty BUT as soon as you dent one side, it crumbles right down to nothing.

Internal Abdominal Pressure (IAP)

As you breathe, your inner core unit works as a pressurized system. This is what provides the support you need to move your body in different ways and protect against injury. When you learn to engage your core, you are managing the internal pressure vs the external pressure. There are many ways to know if you are engaging these muscles properly. If you start to experience any signs and symptoms to suggest that there is a mismanagement of pressure and you need to modify.

IAP and Pregnancy

Now think about this: As your baby grows inside your uterus, your TVA will naturally be compromised. The connective tissue between your Rectus Abdominus, Linea Alba thins out and your TVA has to stretch to make room for your baby. Totally NORMAL!! As your pregnancy progresses, it becomes significantly harder to manage the IAP within your inner CORE unit. (your soda can).



That's why it is so important to learn how to properly engage during pregnancy to prevent further core dysfunction, injury and complications AND set your body up for a successful recovery and healing process.

WIN WIN RIGHT?

CORE BREATHING is the most effective way to STRENGTHEN YOUR CORE!



For proper function, you must be able to ENGAGE and RELAX your core muscles. When you ENGAGE the deep core, you create tension in the muscles and tissues that help control the IAP. When you RELAX the deep core you are allowing room for baby and your body to expand release tension. The inability to do one or both may result in an increased risk of developing postpartum issues such as DIASTASIS RECTI(thinning of connective tissue between ridges of the rectus abdominus), incontinence or prolapse.

Now, take a few deep breaths!

Which part of your body is moving the most?

Chest? Shoulders? Belly?

Is it easy or hard to take to a deep breath?

**Learning how to feel what is happening inside
your body is the first step.**

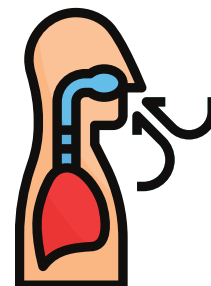


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It's time to learn how to BREATHE with your DIAPHRAGM and ENGAGE Pelvic Floor!

INHALE → RELAXATION

- Diaphragm contracts down
- TVA will RELAX and move out and away from the body
- Pelvic Floor releases and lowers down



EXHALE → CONTRACTION

- Pelvic Floor lifts and engages up towards the body (like 'kegel' but throughout the ENTIRE Pelvic Floor)
- TVA contracts and pulls in (like a corset tightening around the lower abdomen)
- Diaphragm moves up
- CUE: "Hug Your Baby" up and in towards your ribs

Breathing Tips

- Put your hands on your baby - aim to have the MOST movement in your belly as you inhale
- Lie on your Back to start - it can be easier to feel movement in your belly when you stop the movement in your chest and shoulders
- Practice!!! This is a new technique and it takes time to get it right!
- Try your CORE BREATHING in many different positions.
- Don't worry if you mess it up - it happens - just reset and start again
- Don't hold your breath!!!



Rule #2

**Previous
Exercise Ability**

Your prenatal exercise intensity/ability is directly related to your level of fitness BEFORE YOU WERE PREGNANT!

A woman who exercises at an intense level 5-6 days a week should/can continue at her current level of fitness for most of her pregnancy. As her pregnancy progresses, there will be a natural decrease in load and endurance.

Beginners need to slowly build up to a level of fitness that feels right for their body .



This is a picture of me deadlifting 90lb at 8 months pregnant with my second son Micah. BEFORE I was pregnant, I was lifting around 165lb so even though the load is HEAVY, it is a decrease from my pre-pregnancy ability. I was also very experienced in CORE BREATHING and was able to properly engage my CORE throughout all my lifts. Lifts like these are not right for EVERYONE during pregnancy but I LOVED IT!



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Pregnancy Is...

- Not a time to try something new and dangerous
- Not a time to hit your PR
- Not a time to push yourself to extreme exhaustion

Pregnancy is a GREAT time to start an appropriate fitness routine that makes you feel strong and awesome.



The goal of
PRENATAL FITNESS
is to make you feel
AMAZING!

It is never too late
or early to add
exercise into your
daily routine.


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Rule #3

Listen To Your Body

How Do You Know When an Exercise Isn't Right for You?

'Coning' or Inversion of LINEA ALBA –
Diastasis Recti
Pain or Pressure on
your Pelvic Floor
Back Pain – Hip Pain
Incontinence or Urgency
Cardio: Extreme Exhaustion

This is not an exhaustive list. There may be instances where a particular exercise just doesn't feel right. Remember your body is shifting and changing everyday! Something that felt good last week may not be right today. And that's ok!

Diastasis Recti & Pregnancy

Definition: A thinning or loosening of the connective tissue (Linea Alba) between the ridges of the Rectus Abdominus causing them to separate.

All pregnant women will get a DRA by their 3rd trimester. DON'T FREAK OUT!! That is what is supposed to happen! Your body is making room for your baby to grow and develop. That is why it is so important to learn how to engage and RELAX these muscles as your pregnancy progresses. In pregnancy, when you see coning/popping in any position, it denotes there is a mismanagement of pressure from the inside of your inner core unit. (remember the soda can?) At this point, it is essential to start modifying your exercises so you don't put unnecessary pressure on a core system that cannot support it properly. If you listen to your body and modify when needed, you will decrease the risk of further CORE DYSFUNCTION in the later stages of pregnancy AND in the postpartum recovery period. It's all about setting your body up for success!!

This women is leaning back in a V Sit position. If you are further along in your pregnancy you can try this position to see if you have similar symptoms. If you do, this position isn't safe for you anymore. Time to modify!



How do you MODIFY?

1. CORE BREATHING

Breathing with your Diaphragm will always help support your movement whether it is in the gym or not. You can reduce your symptoms (pain, pressure, coning etc) just by activating your whole inner core unit (remember you learned this at the beginning of this book)

2. ELEVATE PLANK POSITION

Exercises such as planks, push ups or bentover rows put added pressure on your abdominal area, especially when pregnant. Elevating these types of movements to a bench or chair will widen the angle and release of this direct pressure from gravity. Women who are in their 3rd trimester can even perform them against a wall.

3. ROLL TO YOUR SIDE

If you are seeing a coning on your belly when you get up from a supine position – this is a sign that you need to start to modify. If you are lying down, roll to your side and push yourself up to a seated position. This goes for getting out of bed in the morning.

4. EXERCISE SELECTION

Some exercises may not 'feel' right in your body during pregnancy. Ex. Pull Ups, Hinged forward positions or classic 'ab' exercises. Consider your goal during your exercise selection. Do you really want to create a bunch of tension in an area that is going to expand any way?



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You are ready to start working out!

Q: What exercises should you focus on?

A: Movements that you do EVERYDAY!
Ex. Squats, Lunges, Bend(Deadlift),
Pushing and Pulling(Rows)

**Strengthen CORE, GLUTES, CHEST
and BACK as these areas tend to be
weak and underactive in pregnancy.**



Some Considerations...

- Make an appointment with a Pelvic Floor Physiotherapist. An internal assessment can help determine how your muscles are functioning and if any guidance or care is needed
- Always ask your doctor BEFORE starting any exercise program during pregnancy
- Certain conditions can impact your ability to exercise (Ex. placenta previa, accreta)
- Work with a professional – not all fitness instructors are educated about prenatal fitness. Googling an article on prenatal fitness does not count. Sorry.

When to STOP Exercising

Shortness of breath
Intense pain or contractions
Excessive bleeding
Nausea/vomiting
Feeling faint, weak
Extreme fatigue

If you experience ANY of these symptoms,
stop and call your doctor right away



As I said in the beginning of this book, I'm on a mission to help women feel confident while exercising at any stage in their pregnancy! It's time to loose the anxiety and confusion and start effectively preparing your body for one of the most important days in your life!!

That's why I've created...



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THE MIGHTY MOM 'TO BE' GROUP COACHING PROGRAM

A 6 week ONLINE group exercise program designed to actually prepare you for labor and delivery, reduce the risk of complications and build a community of STRONG prenatal women.



THE MIGHTY MOM 'TO BE' GROUP COACHING PROGRAM

What's Included:

- **One Weekly Live or Recorded Prenatal Workout (Core Breathing, Workout + Stretch) designed for the members of the group - Saturdays at 9:30 am**
- **Weekly Group Zoom Hangout after the Workout**
- **Client Profile in TrueCoach App**
- **2 Additional weekly workouts delivered through the TrueCoach App (based on needs of the group)**

**A program like this would cost: \$50/week
= \$200 for 6 weeks**



But That's Not All...

BONUS #1:

Direct Messaging support from me for the length of the program(\$150)

Bonus #2:

Private FB Group to connect with members of the program (\$100)

Bonus #3:

Exclusive Access to Prenatal Expert Presentations throughout the program(2-3/session)(\$150)

Bonus #4

Live Birth Prep Tutorial with Pelvic Physio Therapist and Coach(\$100)

GROUP COACHING PROGRAM

Live Class/Workouts = \$200

Messge Support = \$150

FB GROUP = \$100

Prenatal Experts = \$150

Blrth Prep = \$100

~~\$700~~

**Mighty Mom To Be 6
week Program is
\$297 plus HST**

E BOOK DISCOUNT CODE: MOM10

Save 10% off!!

(That's almost \$30 in savings)

Go to MIGHTYMOM.CA for more details and
the next session start date!

TESTIMONIALS

Prior to my pregnancy I was a gym member who didn't really believe in online exercise programs. With the pandemic came some major changes and adjustments. I wanted to remain active in a safe environment. I stumbled upon Jessica through a webinar and was immediately drawn to her positive energy and honest approach to fitness.

Live prenatal exercises classes were held every Saturday and through Jessica's hosting I looked forward to discussing concerns and frustrations with other moms who were going through the same thing. Furthermore, Jess was able to have some informative and expert guests to join us. I found myself incredibly motivated through the group workouts and that motivation continued on through the rest of the week with the TrueCoach app.

The app included a variety of exercises with specific modifications linked to my pregnancy. Whenever I was unsure of a certain exercise I quickly uploaded a video of myself and received instant feedback from Jess through the app. I look forward to continuing my training with Jessica as she has demonstrated an incredible work ethic and she truly cares about her clients emotional and physical goals. - Vicky

Really thrilled with my experience in the Mighty Mom to Be program! This is my first pregnancy and having Jess's sound instruction and energy makes me feel confident that I can in fact work up a sweat during pregnancy! My body feels better with these workouts and my mind feels strong. Plus, feeling like I'm doing something that could help me have a smoother birthing experience helps settle my nerves. Jess is fantastic! She's knowledgeable, easy to chat with and great with instruction and feedback. So glad that I found and keep participating in this program!

- Jess

