

# Postnatal Exercise Plan

This playbook outlines a safe and effective exercise routine for new mothers to aid in postpartum recovery and help them return to pre-pregnancy fitness levels. It focuses on gradually reintroducing physical activity while taking into account the unique needs of a postnatal body.

## Step 1: **Consultation**

Schedule an appointment with your healthcare provider to get clearance before starting any postnatal exercise program. Discuss any concerns and listen to recommendations based on your delivery and personal health.

## Step 2: **Start Slow**

Begin with gentle activities such as walking, pelvic floor exercises, and stretching. Aim for short sessions, approximately 5-10 minutes, and focus on listening to your body to avoid overexertion.

## Step 3: **Strengthen Core**

Gradually introduce exercises that strengthen the core and pelvic floor muscles. These could include pelvic tilts, kegel exercises, and deep belly breathing.

## Step 4: **Cardiovascular Health**

As your strength builds, incorporate low-impact cardio exercises such as swimming, cycling, or using the elliptical machine. Start with 10-15 minutes and gradually increase as tolerated.

## Step 5: **Increase Intensity**

Once you are comfortable and your doctor agrees, add moderate-intensity exercises to your routine. This could include faster walking, light jogging, or a postnatal exercise class.

## Step 6: **Add Resistance**

Incorporate light resistance training using body weight, resistance bands, or free weights to build muscle strength. Ensure proper form to avoid injury.

## Step 7: **Stay Hydrated**

Throughout your exercise routine, make sure to stay hydrated, especially if you are breastfeeding. Drink water before, during, and after workouts.

## Step 8: **Monitor Progress**

Keep track of your exercise routine, how you feel during and after workouts, and any progress you're making. Adjust your routine accordingly based on your recovery and fitness levels.

## Step 9: **Self-Care**

Prioritize rest and recovery as part of your exercise plan. Allow for adequate sleep and consider practices such as massage or yoga to aid in relaxation and recovery.

# **General Notes**

## **Doctor's Approval**

The timing of when to start postnatal exercises can vary greatly depending on individual circumstances and the type of delivery. Always get approval from your healthcare provider before commencing any exercise after birth.

## **Warning Signs**

Stop exercising and seek medical advice immediately if you experience unusual pain, dizziness, excessive fatigue, vaginal bleeding, or any other concerning symptoms.

## **Breastfeeding Considerations**

If breastfeeding, consider feeding your baby or pumping before exercising to avoid discomfort. Wearing a supportive bra can also help prevent discomfort and support breast health.