

Exercise and Your Baby

Scientists now know that exercising during pregnancy is a good thing to do. (See [Exercise and Pregnancy](#).) They also know that it is very healthy for the baby. Here's why.

During exercise, your blood flows faster. This means that more blood also comes to your baby. Blood brings vitamins and other good things to your baby, and will help her grow stronger.

Moving around a lot when you exercise is also good for your baby. It can help her muscles grow to make her stronger. Strong babies have an easier time being born, so your labor may be shorter. Strong babies are also not as worn out after birth. This makes them more alert.

When mothers exercise a lot, their babies must get used to lots of new things. They may bounce around more. There may be more noise. The amount of blood and oxygen going to them may increase.

Babies soon learn that changes like this are okay. They learn to adjust. When these babies are born, they adjust more quickly to the world outside they womb.

But these aren't the only good things that can happen when mothers exercise during pregnancy. Scientists have studied these babies right after birth, and also when they got much older. Here are some of the things they have found.

Benefits to babies whose mothers exercised during pregnancy:

- They are less likely to be premature.
- They are more likely to be a normal weight at birth.
- They may be smarter and more mature at birth, because noise and movement during pregnancy helps their brains grow faster.
- They will have less body fat than other babies, but will be just as big.
- They tend to be stronger than babies whose mothers did not exercise.
- They tend to be easier to soothe when they become upset.



Crib Sheets

Health information about pregnancy, parenting and infant care from the University of Washington School of Nursing.

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