

Research Reviews

Exercising Through Pregnancy

Clapp, J.F. III, (2002) *Exercising Through Your Pregnancy*. Omaha, Nebraska: Addicus Books. www.AddicusBooks.com

This is a guide to the physiological changes in pregnancy and how exercise in addition influences the physiology. It is written by an obstetrician/researcher who was on the faculty at Case Western Reserve. He did the research to answer the question of how exercise affects the pregnancy and fetus. The empirical data from over 500 women is very convincing evidence that exercise for most women during pregnancy is a good thing.

Clapp states that, “regular weight-bearing exercise (walking is the best example) is the best type of exercise for pregnant women because it complements the adaptations to pregnancy. However the proper frequency, duration, and intensity will vary from woman to woman.” (Page 131)

Some of the benefits of regular exercise done throughout pregnancy are:

1. less weight gain
2. less body fat added in weight gain
3. less maternal discomforts
4. greater and faster return to pre-pregnancy health
5. less pain experienced during labor
6. shorter labor
7. fewer cesarean sections
8. less complications during labor
9. positive mood state
10. fewer upper respiratory tract infections
11. babies with higher scores on Developmental Scales at 1 year.
12. by age 5, babies whose mothers consistently exercised all during their pregnancies were less fat, and had higher IQ and language scores.

The book takes you through the various stages of pregnancy and postpartum, citing factors to monitor and making suggestions for how to alter your exercise routine based on symptoms, such as tiredness or heart rate.

The book would be an excellent source for clients who are naturally curious and readers. It is a must for health care providers who want to encourage clients to exercise.