

# POST-PARTUM: BACK TO EXERCISE

By Coach Emma

Keep in mind post-partum, that your body is still recovering from labor and pregnancy.

Taking it slow and going at your own pace is an essential part of the process if you want your body to recover properly.

Exercise and movement post-partum comes with an array of benefits; from improved fitness, improved mood + reduced anxiety and depression, and increased energy (which I'm sure, is welcomed with both arms)

By strengthening those pelvic floor muscles after labor, we reduce the likelihood of urinary incontinence which many ladies may experience after pregnancy.

Moving your body, in a safe way, will speed up the recovery process your body is currently going under.

How we go about this movement though is important, and completely person dependent.

Everyone's body is different and has unique healing times. This can also vary between pregnancies and can also depend on the type of delivery/labor mother and baby experienced.

Always check with your doctor before getting back into any exercise!

## **Recommendations for post-natal ladies (if pregnancy and labor ran smoothly)**

- First three weeks: include light walking (around the house), post-natal core / breathing exercises and pelvic floor exercises. (I will include some below)

- 1-2 months: Going for light walks. (15 mins or so and from there you can increase)
- In terms of training, bodyweight movements + resistance bands should be your go to at this early stage. Getting your body moving again (if it feels good) is the aim. No intensity should be considered here!
- Building those pelvic floor exercises into a bodyweight + banded workout program is ideal. Start small, maybe 2 x 20-minute workouts per week.
- 2- 3 months: Look for ways to progress your workouts, this may include longer workouts, shorter rest times or adding in a small weight. Again, no mad intensity is recommended!
- 3- 4 months: Slow and steady return to your normal training routine is allowed provided your pelvic muscles and core strength are back to normal, (get this checked out!)

## Ladies who have had a c section

- If you've had a C section, as common as they are + despite what you may hear, you have gone through a massive procedure, and your body needs more time to recover.
- Although you may be cleared for some exercise after 6-8 weeks, a gentle reminder that just because the scar on your stomach is healed, doesn't mean your insides have fully healed yet. Approaching exercise with very light intensity is recommended, such as bodyweight + banded movements, light walking and some gentle core/pelvic floor exercises.
- I recommend very similar things to a lady who has gone through vaginal birth + C section.

**Every single woman is different, every single pregnancy is different, and healing times WILL differ. But one thing remains the same;**

**Slow and steady wins the race!**

## **Exercises to avoid after C section**

- Any exercise that causes pain (especially towards your scar area)
- Heavy loaded movements
- Movements with direct downward pressure on your pelvic floor (heavy squat)
- Explosive movements; jump squats, box jumps, running, burpees.
- In terms of core exercises; sit ups, leg lowers/raises, planks, crunches.

## **Pelvic floor exercises + core breathing exercises:**

- Bird dog row
- Glute bridges
- Pelvic tilt's
- Kegel exercise
- Connection breath's
- Diaphragmatic breathing

*Coach Emma*

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