

# Relieve Stress This Holiday Season

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## HEART HEALTHY

Some great exercises that work your heart are walking, stationary cycling, or using an elliptical trainer. If you've been running or doing more vigorous exercise before pregnancy, you are safe to continue that activity as long as you feel good doing it and your pre-natal care provider is on board. If you've been fairly sedentary up to this point, start out doing 10-15 min bouts of cardiovascular exercise and gradually work up. You'll be surprised how good it will make you feel.

## Feel Better and More Energized

Being pregnant or having a new baby is very demanding on your body and mind. Add the stress of the holidays to the equation and you may feel mentally and physically exhausted and overwhelmed. If you are a pregnant mom, I hope your pre-natal care provider has stressed the importance of regular exercise, but just because you believe it is important doesn't make it magically happen. At times like this we need to think creatively in order to find ways to sneak exercise into our days. If you finally have your baby in your arms, you know that time to do anything is hard to come by. Just getting a shower before noon can feel like a major accomplishment. I've been there myself, as I'm a mother of four children. I hope the following suggestions are helpful to you. Adopting some of these ideas can help you improve physically and assist you in keeping your sanity intact.

How's your posture? Are you slumping on the couch,

or hunched over your keyboard? Some basic posture improvements can do wonders in making you feel more energized and improve your core muscular endurance. When you find yourself slumping on the couch after a long day, get on the floor instead. Really, just try it. Remember sitting crisscross on the mat while your teacher read you a story? That's all there is to it.

By Shauna Cheshire, RN, ACE  
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Owner of Mia Mama Fitness LLC



If you try it you can see that you automatically lift your chest and roll your shoulders back. While you can slump over in this position, it does not feel natural to do so. Holding yourself up like this helps to build endurance in your core muscles, and with time you'll be able to sit like this for longer and longer periods. Fit in this exercise, known as the **Taylor Sit**, as often as you can. **Cont'd on pg 2**

## Belly Breathing

Place your hands on your belly with your middle fingers barely touching, and take in a nice big breath. Do your fingers separate when you inhale and come back together

when you exhale? If so, you are belly breathing. If not, work on pushing out with your abdominals while you fill your lungs. With some time you'll get there. This type of slow

deep breathing is great practice as belly breathing is great to use in labor, and to calm yourself when you're frustrated caring for a fussy baby.

## Kegels

This is an exercise you can do anytime and anywhere, and no one can see you doing it. To do a Kegel tighten the muscle that you would use to quickly shut off urine flow. This exercise works the PC muscle in the pelvic floor that runs like a figure eight around your vagina and anus. Sounds glamorous, I know. Keeping this muscle in shape can decrease your chances of stress incontinence down the road so you can cough or sneeze with confidence, and maybe you'll even be that cool mom who can still jump on the trampoline in a few years. This is a rather simple exercise to do, but the biggest problem is remembering to do it. Try to integrate this exercise into your daily activities. Are you on the road a lot? Any time you hit a stop light, pulse that PC muscle 10-15 times. How about diaper changes? Answering the phone? Find something you do several times a day and attach 10-15 Kegels to it. That way you'll be much more likely to get them done. While it's an important exercise for all women, pregnant women and those recovering from childbirth stand to benefit the most.

**Cont...** If you can't get used to sitting on the floor, you can sit on an exercise ball and get similar benefits. Either the Taylor Sit or sitting on an exercise ball provide a great position in which to relax in and practice some good belly breathing. (See pg 1)

While the exercises mentioned in this newsletter are great to train your muscles, we cannot forget the most important muscle of all, your heart. In the year 2000, The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists adopted new guidelines for exercise during pregnancy. These guidelines state that women will benefit most from at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity exercise most days of the week. I know that may sound daunting, but you and your baby will reap so many benefits if you can make the time. Anything

that gets your heart rate up and keeps it elevated for a period of time will strengthen your heart and improve your cardiovascular endurance. How hard should you work? Think about a scale that goes from 0 up to 10. Let's say that 0 is lounging around, not exerting yourself at all. 10 is so physically taxing that you are near collapse. Moderate exercise is somewhere right in the middle of that scale, between 4 and 6. This level of exercise should make you feel winded, but not breathless. Be sure you can talk in short phrases to ensure you're not working too hard. If you ever feel dizzy, or sick, stop what you are doing and sit or get on your side and take some breaths until you feel better. Exercise should be something you look

forward to, so be sure you don't push yourself to exhaustion. Some other precautions to be aware of: if you start to leak any fluid, experience any vaginal bleeding, have cramping or uterine contractions that are painful, or otherwise feel that something is not right, stop exercise and seek advice or treatment from your care provider.

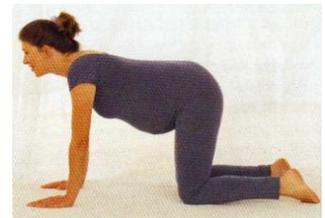
While there are more exercise ideas, these are very simple and require little to no equipment to do. I recognize it can be hard to find one uninterrupted block of time to "work out." Sprinkle these exercises into your day and you will see improvements in how you feel physically and emotionally. By taking a little time to care for yourself, you and your baby will benefit. I wish you a very happy and healthy holiday.

## Pelvic Tilts

Or cat/camel- this exercise goes by several names. Simply get on your hands and knees and suck in your abdominal muscles while you round your lower back and push it towards the ceiling, the relax and return to a flat back. This not only gives you a great lower back stretch that we all need, but if you focus on bringing your belly button to your spine you also get

the benefit of building abdominal strength and endurance. It's a great way to safely engage and train your abdominals while you're pregnant and when you're recovering after birth. These feel great in the morning, after a long day, or anytime you're feeling tired and sore in the low back. Start out doing 10-15 repetitions and then increase to several sets of

10-15 reps.



## Basic Plank

The **basic plank** is another exercise that is wonderful in increasing endurance in your abdominals, leg muscles, and even some upper arm/shoulder muscles. You can easily modify the intensity of this exercise depending on your current fitness level; how far along you are in pregnancy, or how recently you've given birth. Get down and place your forearms on the floor so that your elbows are directly below your shoulders. Now you have the choice of supporting yourself on your knees or toes, the knees being the easier of the two. Whichever you chose, be sure that your body is creating a straight line from your hip to your shoulder. No sticking your bottom up or letting it slump. Keep your shoulders down and away from your ears with your

eyes looking down directly under or slightly in front of you. Now, double check that your elbows are stacked directly under your shoulders. That's it, you've got it. If you are quite far into your pregnancy you may find it easier to do this plank on an incline. Instead of placing your forearms on the floor, you'd put them on a stable bench or chair. This creates less low back strain and gives your belly more room to hang. This is another great modification if doing the plank hold on your knees seems too easy, but doing it on your toes is still too difficult. The goal is to increase the amount of time you can hold this position with the form I described above. When you start to lose form it is best to stop, rest for a few seconds and then try again. As you hold

position focus on those core muscles as they work to stabilize you and keep you in position. This exercise works the deepest of the abdominal muscles that wrap around from the front to back of your torso. Because of this the transverse abdominals act as a kind of corset to keep everything held in and tight, making it a very important foundational muscle. This can be a very challenging exercise at first. Be patient and try a few plank holds before or after the pelvic tilts described earlier. Try to work up to 30-60 second holds. You may start out on your knees and only holding 10-15 seconds at a time, but that's okay; begin where you are. Your endurance will get better as you do them and practice several times a week.



**A SPECIAL REQUEST FROM MIA MAMA FITNESS WITH A GIFT FOR YOU!**

*I need your help to determine how to best offer my fitness services to mothers in the local area. Go to the link <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Q77MQ8K> to take the Mia Mama Fitness Survey. Mothers that take the survey and then go on to enroll in a future class will get their first two weeks free. Your participation will make it possible for me to serve the most women and make a healthy difference for mothers and babies.*

## Wall Squats

Do you remember gym class and doing **wall squats**? Often this was done to punish the class for bad behavior, but it is a very safe and effective exercise to build up endurance in the muscles located on the front of your upper legs, known as your quadriceps. All you need is yourself and a wall. Place your back flat against the wall, your feet hip-width and far enough in front of you so that your knees stay right above your ankles as your slide down the wall bending your knees until your thighs are parallel to the

floor. You may find it too difficult to start out so deep in the squat, so bring it up a little and eventually you'll be able to get to that 90 degree angle. Start out holding until your muscles fatigue and then take a short break and try again. You can do these at work, home, or pretty much anywhere. It takes just a minute, so squeeze these in a few times a week. You'll build up your endurance very quickly, so time yourself and see how over the coming weeks you can hold longer and longer. It's good to aim for 45-60

second holds, but as long as you see improvement you are benefitting.



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Holiday Hours:  
Monday – Thursday 10-6  
Friday – Saturday 10-8

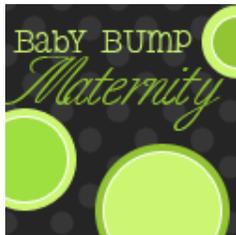
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## About Us

Baby Bump Maternity is a locally owned clothing and accessory boutique. We pride ourselves on providing knowledgeable and professional expertise to expecting or nursing mothers.

Baby Bump Maternity opened its doors in 2009 on the idea that pregnancy doesn't have to mean going without comfortable, classic or stylish clothing. The combination of affordable and unique has become a winning recipe. Situated on the revamped historic

25<sup>th</sup> street in the heart of Ogden, the surrounding businesses have a shared themed – we're all locally owned, small businesses.

The Baby Bump Maternity team have carefully assembled clothing and accessories designed for all stages of pregnancy from the first hint of nausea and belly growth through delivery and nursing. While we have focused on Mom, we haven't forgotten about the newest addition! We also carry a

small selection of infant and toddler items; including softest muslin swaddling blankets, carriers and fantastic diaper bags.

We offer local products when possible because we feel that being a local business gives us an opportunity to champion other local businesses!