

Wellness Wednesday



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5 Myths About Exercise During Pregnancy

Overall, working out while pregnant can help you have a healthier experience. It's time to stop believing this outdated advice.

When it comes to pregnancy, there are a lot of rules. Many of them are necessary for the safety of you and your baby, while others have been disproven time and time again.

Many of those myths are about exercise. When it comes to working out when you're pregnant, there are many falsehoods that are almost gospel — and that may keep pregnant folks from exercising in the way that's best for them.

Exercise is an important part of most people's pregnancy journey. According to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, working out during pregnancy results in lower incidences of preterm birth, preeclampsia, gestational diabetes and more.



Below, experts share the biggest myths when it comes to pregnancy and fitness.

Myth 1: Exercise is dangerous for you or your baby.

"There is so much fear — I like to reframe it as a lack of education both from professionals as well as moms, whether they're first-time pregnant or fifth-time pregnant — around safety," said Brooke Cates, the CEO and founder of the fitness app The Bloom Method. "Everyone wants to know: Is it safe?"

The answer to this question is yes. Not only is it safe, but it's extremely beneficial, too, Cates explained. "I would be as brazen to say it is a vital component to a healthy pregnancy, a more empowering birth experience and, really, an overall more embodying experience into motherhood," she said.

Of course, there are some instances in which medical providers do not recommend exercise, said Jessie Mundell, a prenatal and postnatal fitness trainer. But this is generally only for people with very rare conditions.

"For the majority of folks, it is considered safe and recommended for the health of the pregnant person and for the fetus ... to be exercising in pregnancy," Mundell said.

Check with your doctor before starting an exercise plan and be sure to keep them updated on your fitness regimen throughout your pregnancy. If you notice any discomfort, get in touch with your doctor to make sure you're OK to work out.

Myth 2: Your heart rate should stay below 140 beats per minute.

"A big one is the myth that your heart rate shouldn't go above 140 beats per minute when exercising in pregnancy, and that recommendation has been unproven for decades now, actually," Mundell said.

Instead of going by your heart rate — which can vary greatly depending on the person, their body and their exercise experience — go by your rate of perceived exertion, or RPE, she said. This means you need to listen to your body, which can be tough, Mundell added. But understanding your RPE can be a good way to know how your body is doing.

"We tend to follow basically a rule of we want to be in the guidelines of a 6 to 7 RPE when it comes to exercise intensity," she explained. That 6 to 7 RPE is on a scale of 1 to 10, and those numbers are unique to you. You decide what feels like an all-out 10 compared to a 1 or a 2. But a good rule of thumb is that an RPE of 1 shouldn't feel like any effort at all — like walking to the kitchen to put something away.

In the 6 to 7 range, you are feeling breathy but not breathless and your workout feels like a moderate challenge. "You feel like there's some energy, some effort left in the tank," Mundell said.

Myth 3: Running and jumping aren't safe.

For a healthy person with a healthy pregnancy, doing exercises like running or moves that require jumping are generally safe, according to Mundell.

"There might be a time period that comes where folks feel uncomfortable in the abdomen, in the belly or in the pelvic floor itself and take those exercises out," she said. "But again, for some folks, they're OK to be running and jumping through the first and second trimester and even some into the third trimester."

It'll depend from person to person, and this is another area where it's really important to listen to your body, she said. You should also consult with your physician about your specific pregnancy. If these (or any other) moves are making you uncomfortable, you can try out something else.

Myth 4: It's unsafe to continue exercising in the same way you did pre-pregnancy.

Many folks believe they need to stop exercising the way they're used to as soon as they get pregnant, Cates said.

But if you love CrossFit, you can continue to go to your gym and take part in the exercises you know so well. Just modify the moves or adjust as necessary; you can even work with your trainer to get alternatives in the moment.

"I might tell you it would be wise to scale your weight down significantly as your pregnancy progresses, but there is no reason you can't still go to that CrossFit gym and do aspects of the moves that you were doing pre-pregnancy," Cates said.

Myth 5: If you didn't exercise before pregnancy — or didn't do a certain kind of exercise — it's not safe to start.

Mundell said another myth she hears is that pregnant people shouldn't start any new activities or exercises during pregnancy, which is generally not true. For example, "if you have not been strength training prior to pregnancy, you absolutely can start in any trimester of pregnancy," she said.

If you didn't exercise at all before pregnancy but want to begin, that's OK, too. As long as you are cleared for exercise by your doctor and feel comfortable trying something different, it is perfectly fine to try a new kind of fitness regimen, Mundell said. Make sure to research exercises that are generally considered safe for the point you're at in your pregnancy.

All in all, exercising while pregnant is valuable and can help strengthen your body for the journey ahead while also reducing the stress you may be feeling as you move through your pregnancy.

It's important to be open with your doctor about your exercise habits throughout your pregnancy and to stay away from any workouts your doctor deems unfit for you and your developing baby.



HONEY SRIRACHA ROASTED SALMON RICE BOWLS

506 Calories | PREP TIME: 20 mins | COOK TIME: 10 mins | TOTAL TIME: 30 mins
YIELD: 4 servings | Course: Dinner, Lunch | Cuisine: Asian



INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 tablespoon Sriracha, plus more for serving
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce, or gluten-free tamari
- 2 teaspoons minced or grated fresh ginger
- 1 ½ pounds skinless salmon filets
- 3 Persian cucumbers, thinly sliced, or English cucumber, cut into thin half-moons
- 1 ½ teaspoons rice vinegar, plus more as needed
- 1 teaspoon toasted sesame oil
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- 3 cups cooked short-grain brown rice
- 4 ounces avocado, from 1 small Hass, thinly sliced
- Furikake seasoning, or sesame seeds, for garnish

These healthy roasted salmon rice bowls are made with bite sized pieces of honey-Sriracha salmon, cucumbers and avocado.

They are fast and easy, the whole recipe comes together in less than 10 minutes! They are broiled so there is no need to marinate or wait for the oven to preheat. The great thing about a bowl is that it's fully customizable, so feel free to add other vegetables or switch up the protein. Delicious!

Nutrition Information

Serving: 1 bowl, Calories: 506 kcal, Carbohydrates: 48 g, Protein: 38.5 g, Fat: 17.5 g, Saturated Fat: 2.5 g, Cholesterol: 93.5 mg, Sodium: 489 mg, Fiber: 5 g, Sugar: 10.5 g

Source: [Skinnytaste.com](https://www.skinnytaste.com)



INSTRUCTIONS



1. Preheat the broiler with a rack about 6 inches below it. Line a rimmed baking sheet with nonstick foil.
2. In a small bowl, combine the honey, Sriracha, soy sauce, and ginger; stir with a fork until the honey dissolves.
3. Cut the salmon into 1-inch cubes and place them on the baking sheet, leaving a bit of space between each piece.
4. Brush the salmon with the glaze and cook under the broiler for 3 to 4 minutes, or until it's easily flaked with a fork and golden on top.
5. Meanwhile, combine the sliced cucumber with the rice vinegar, sesame oil, and salt.
6. To serve: Place 3/4 cup rice in each bowl. Divide and top with salmon, sliced avocado, cucumber, and a drizzle of Sriracha, if desired, plus a sprinkle of Furikake seasoning.
7. If you'd like a little more acidity, add just a dash of rice vinegar.

FEATURED EXERCISE

<https://www.self.com/gallery/total-body-strength-workout>

Featured Exercise ► Squat to Lateral Lunge ✓ (Alternating Sides)

» Do it:

- You can do this move with or without weight. Start with your feet hip-width apart, core engaged, and hands held in a prayer or fist at chest height.
- Do a squat by hinging at the hips, sending your hips back, and bending both knees until your thighs are parallel to the floor.
- Stand and immediately step out to the right with your right foot.
- Bend your right knee, sending your hips back, and sink into a lateral lunge, keeping your left leg perfectly straight.
- Push off your right foot and return to your hip-width position, then immediately send your hips back, bend both knees, and sink into another squat.
- Now step out with your left foot to do a lateral lunge on the left side. Then return to a squat.
- Continue to alternate sides with your lateral lunges, adding a squat between each one.

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Regular exercise can help you control your weight, reduce your risk of heart disease, and strengthen your bones and muscles. But if it's been awhile since you've exercised and you have health issues or concerns, it's a good idea to talk to your doctor before starting a new exercise routine.



Being happy is a very personal thing and it really has nothing to do with anyone else.



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