Pilates booklet for pregnant women.

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PREFACE

This Pilates exercise booklet has been made especially for Ellen Bergsma, a qualified physiotherapy and Pilates instructor. This booklet has not been formulated for an individual pregnant women, the information is limited specifically for a professional with prior knowledge.

We would like to thank Ellen for her continuous support and guidance while making this booklet. We would also like to thank Andrea Livia Cara Francesca Marcussen for taking all the photographs needed in this booklet, without her help it would not look so presentable!
INTRODUCTION

The information presented here is founded on our review of musculoskeletal pregnancy disorders experienced during the gestation period with evidence based exercises during this time and supplementary information from reviews and literature on Pilates principles. The review found, and agrees, with the most of the researched literature that exercise is beneficial for musculoskeletal disorders during pregnancy.

In this booklet we have made a Pilates exercise program that changes progressively with each trimester throughout the pregnancy. The exercises will be suited, to the best logic available, specifically to each trimester’s problems. These exercises are not a rule, but more a guideline, if necessary changes can be made and tailored for a specific patient if they are too provocative.
The core or powerhouse

The powerhouse is located in the center of the body. In Pilates all movements are generated by the powerhouse: this is where all the energy that a person exerts comes from. It is from within powerhouse, the abdominal region of the body, that the spine and all of our major organs are supported. It can be visualized as a corset wrapped around the midsection made up these muscles: the transverses abdominus, the pelvic floor, the internal and external obliques, and the multifidi. A strong core allows for more efficient movement of the extremities (Bryan 2003), when we strengthen this area, we also improve our alignment and posture and enhance overall health.

Muscolino et al (2004) describes the 3 major effects Pilates has on the powerhouse: it affects the posture of the pelvis resulting in postural changes to the lumbar spine, it works directly up upon the musculoskeletal structure of the spine (lumbar in particular) by strengthening, stretching and lengthening the spine and it affects the structural integrity or tone of the abdominopelvic cavity as a whole. Training the powerhouse during pregnancy is not harmful for the baby. The baby lies underneath the powerhouse and so the work done in this area will increase the blood flow throughout the powerhouse and consequently the child will receive more oxygen and nutrients (Winsor 2001). During pregnancy it would be of special concern that the abdominal exercises take into account the anatomical construction of the body (Calais-Germain 2010).

How to activate the Powerhouse

Step 1

- Tighten the perineum and then relax it.
- If you have never done this before: lie supine with knees bent, ankles in plantar flexion, and feet flat on the floor. Tense and relax the sphincter of the anus.
- Once the perineum is contracted contract the lower part of the abdomen without allowing the higher abdominal muscles to come into action.
- Repeat several times the successive contraction of perineum + lower part of the abdomen and then add the slightly higher proportion of the abdominal muscles.

Step 2

- Release the contraction from the pubic bone to the navel, walking from bottom to top.
- This is an important step towards the abdominal organs from the bottom upwards.

Step 3

- Contract the muscle transversus abdominis. This feels like the waist is constricted.
- Maintain the contraction of steps 1 and 2.
- Contract the oblique externus abdominus muscle. To help tighten this place both hands along the grain of the muscle (from the pelvis to the ribs).

Tip: For the steps above you can follow the inguinal ligament with your fingers to find the lowest contracted fibres.
The benefits of Pilates for pregnant women:

The many benefits Pilates has to offer during pregnancy are:

- It teaches your body awareness.
- It helps to improve posture which reduces stress on the joints.
- It can help ensure that your body’s systems (circulatory lymphatic, respiratory, digestive) are all functioning efficiently.
- It can teach relaxation and breathing skills, which will be invaluable throughout the pregnancy and also during the birth itself.
- By improving pelvic stability, Pilates may help to prevent pelvic girdle pain. Hormonal changes in the body affect your ligaments (which join bone to bone); they soften to allow the pelvis to expand during the birth itself this means, however, that many of your joints may become unstable, in particular the sacroiliac and symphysis pubis joints.
- The additional weight of the breasts and laxity of the ligaments often causes shoulder and neck problems. By improving upper body posture and movement, Pilates can be instrumental in helping to reduce these problems.
- The deep core muscles strengthened by Pilates exercises will help support the growing weight of the baby, and your spine, by creating a natural girdle of strength. This may be very helpful in reducing back pain.
- As the pregnancy progresses, there is a shift in your centre of gravity. This can result in changes to balance and coordination.
- Many foot, ankles and knee problems start during pregnancy because of the extra weight being carried as well as the laxity of the ligaments. Many of the foot exercises can be done seated.
- Pilates can help the pelvic floor to carry increased weight, for the birth itself and for post natal recovery.
- It can help to prepare you for the vigorous labour, which is extremely hard work.

Tip: Good quality deep abdominal contractions will be difficult once the muscles are stretched during the later stages of pregnancy. Focus on gentle contraction, posture, and pelvic floor work.
General Pilates exercises to avoid in Pregnancy:

- Side lying leg work, eg. side leg raises or pulling leg springs, puts too much force on the sacroiliac joints which can irritate them or cause the pelvis to get pulled out of alignment.
- Exercises with double leg lifts or lowers.
- Avoid overstretching: move within a comfortable range of motion. Ligaments will be loosened during pregnancy.
- Overstretching of the adductors: the pubis becomes unstable from the relaxin hormone present during pregnancy—no “butterfly” stretch.
- Avoid contracting the rectus abdominus too strongly against gravity; if the integrity of the muscle is lost, the two halves of the muscle will shorten and contract as two separate units with each half moving laterally.
- Transversus abdominus engagement must be maintained: If the transversus is weak the rectus abdominis muscle will “bulge” and this added pressure can cause the rectus to separate further.
- Prolonged periods in the supine position: during the first trimester supine positions can be maintained as long as it is comfortable. In the second and third trimesters supine positions are avoided. Lying supine can cut off the oxygen supply to the baby.
- Pilates often involves holding your torso in place while moving your arms and legs in different directions. Make sure to go slowly so that balance is not lost and joints are not hyper extended.
- Avoid flexion of the spine after first trimester eliminate all crunches.

In general avoid:

- Restrictive or tight clothing.
- Lying flat or with your feet over your head in the second half of your pregnancy.
- Getting up from the floor too quickly.
- Overheating: stop for water every 15 minutes if necessary.
- Don't hold your breath!
- Don't do any exercise that causes dizziness, nausea, shortness of breath or pain.
THE FIRST TRIMESTER:

The ideal situation would be to start Pilates before pregnancy begins. If pregnancy is planned joining Pilates classes’ pre-pregnancy to get an idea and feel of what Pilates is advisable. If already pregnant and want to start Pilates it is recommended exercising starts after the first trimester of pregnancy. During the first trimester many pregnant women experience nausea and exhaustion so find it hard to continue or begin a Pilates program. The body will slowly adjust allowing you to do more. All pregnant mothers, regardless of levels of fitness, should seek medical approval before embarking on a new exercise programme. It is also advisable to be under supervision at all times especially during weeks 8-14 of the pregnancy.

WORKOUT:

Some examples of exercises you should not do during your first trimester are:

- All inversions (Short Spine, Jack-knife, Tower, Roll Over)
- Extreme balances (Side Splits on the Reformer)
- Too much of certain abdominal exercises (Stomach Series)

Transition

*Transition between exercises allows you to move from one position to the next, so that there is ‘flow’ throughout the program.*

- Hug your knees back into your chest while seated.
- Release your legs with your feet on the floor, and your knees pointed towards the ceiling.
- Stretch your legs out so that they are long against the mat.
- Bring your arms back up past your ears; your arms should reach straight up from your shoulders.
- Feel comfortable.
- Now your body is in position for the next exercise.
Roll Ups

This exercise puts the body in touch with the powerhouse and allows a nice hamstring and spine stretch. Try to feel the connection from your finger tips to your toes.

Starting position:

- Supine.
- Feel your spine being supported and neutral against the floor.
- Relax your ribs.
- Your legs should be together and flat against the mat.

- Your arms should be reaching up above your head, no wider than shoulder width apart, with your palms facing upwards.

- Create a space between your shoulders and your ears.
- Relax your shoulders.
- Initiate your powerhouse by sinking your navel towards your spine.
Start:

- While breathing in raise your arms towards the ceiling.
- As you reach for the ceiling use your powerhouse to bring your chin towards your chest.
- Keep reaching through your fingertips.

- Your ribs should squeeze down into your powerhouse.
- Imagine you are holding an apple between your chin and chest.

- While breathing out, continue reaching with your arms, curling over as your fingers reach your toes.
- Your spine should not straighten. Maintain a curved position by pulling your navel into your spine. Continue exhaling until you touch your toes.
- While breathing in, roll down.
• Keep reaching with your arms, keeping them at shoulder level.
• Pull your powerhouse into your lower back to maintain the curve in your lower back.
• Your lower four vertebrae will make contact with the mat first.
• Hold your breath at this point as you continue a controlled curl down, vertebra by vertebra. Like a cobra.
• Reach with your arms to control your roll down.
• Now exhale forcefully as you complete the roll down.
• Repeat 6-8 times.
**Single Leg Circles**

*This exercise loosens the hips and stretches the hamstrings. Ignoring the name try and trace a rounded triangle using your leg. Keep the motion smooth. Use the powerhouse to support this motion and squeeze the buttocks for support.*

Starting position:

- Lie supine with arms by the side.

Start:

- Hug your knees to your chest.
- Keep your leg aligned with your hip; relax your leg straight up.
- Get as close as you comfortably can to forming a right angle with your body.
- Without moving your hips cross your leg over your body like a wind screen wiper.
• Once your leg has passed your shoulder, swing it down 6 inches past your passive leg in a curve and then back up to the ceiling.
• Stay within the frame of your body-keep your leg inside the frame of your shoulders.
• Repeat 4 times.
• Reverse motion and repeat 5 times.

• Change legs and repeat on the other side.
Rolling Like a Ball

*This is like a massage for your back. The goal is not to let your heels touch the floor. The point of balance is the buttock bones. Use the powerhouse and control the movement.*

Starting position:

- Sit up and bend your knees as you move your buttocks towards your heels.
- Hug your ankles and curve your spine gently over them.
- Bring your chin to your chest.

- Maintain this position by pulling your powerhouse into your spine and curving your back even more, drawing yourself into a ball.
- Form a C with your spine.
- Arch your feet, only toes should touch the mat.
- Maintain this position as you...

Start:

- Inhale slowly and feel your powerhouse.
- Begin rolling back by bringing your navel into your spin.
• Exhale slowly.
• Use the momentum of your breath to return forwards.
• Maintain a ball position.
• Repeat 6 times.
Single Leg Stretching

This exercise is designed to work on your coordination, relax the hip flexors, and link breath to one movement. As you concentrate on your powerhouse while you begin this movement, you will feel your abs strengthening. Keep your shoulders square. Only move arms and legs.

Starting position:

- Supine.
- Legs extended directly out of your hips and relaxed flat against the mat.
- Arms by your side, palms flat on mat.

Start:

- Inhale slowly. Lift chin to chest.
- Use powerhouse to raise head and shoulders off the mat.
- Simultaneously bring left knee to chest and your left hand to the outside of your left ankle while placing your right hand on the inside of your left knee.
- Shoulders should be relaxed and elbows open.
- Relax ankle and tug on leg towards head twice, breathing out as you do.
- Switch legs and repeat.
- Contract powerhouse.
- Exhale.
- Engage stomach muscles.
- Repeat 5-10 times.
Single Straight Leg Raise

Starting position:

- Bring your right leg straight up until it is perpendicular to the mat.
- Extend your left leg straight out like an arrow coming out of your hip socket, until it is at a 45 degree angle off the mat.

Start:

- Inhale as you reach your arms up and place your hands around your ankle if you can. If you can’t, place them around your calf or your thigh.
- Lift your head, chin to chest.
- Bring shoulders off mat.
- Exhale as you stretch your right leg further by tugging it towards you twice.
- Pull in your powerhouse as you switch legs in a scissors-like motion, bringing your left leg up towards your body.
- Try not to move your torso or your head.
- Exhale as you tug your left leg twice.
- Now move and add some tempo to make the movement vigorous.
- Inhale every 2 sets and exhale every 2 sets.
- Repeat 10 times.
Crisscross

Is great for your abs, this oppositional movement works the abs diagonally.

Starting position:

- Bring both knees to chest.
- Extend your left leg up toward the ceiling, making certain that your lower back is pressed into the mat.
- Head and shoulders should remain off mat.
- One hand over the other behind the head, and elbows open extending straight out from ears.

Start:

- Begin slowly. Breathing in, count 2, as you bend your right leg to the middle of the right collarbone.
- Your left leg extends from your hip at a 45 degree angle.
- From the waist, use your powerhouse to twist your torso to the right. Your torso should move as one unit.
• Look at your right elbow as you place your left elbow inside your right knee.
• Hold for 2 counts.
• Switch sides.

• Legs straight out from the hips, stay within the frame of your body and repeat 3 more times.
• Double tempo with the next 4 reps.
• The small of your back should be pressed against the floor. Firmly glue your buttock to the floor and don’t rock your hips.
• Double your tempo again for the next 4 reps.
Spine Stretch Forwards

*Nice full back stretch, good for posture. Creates space between vertebrae, there is a tactile sensation of lengthening the spine. Contract the powerhouse into the spine.*

Starting position:

- Sit up. Open legs wider than hips.
- Push heels away from you (flex feet).
- Extend arms in front of you.
- Activate powerhouse.

Start:

- Inhale and contract powerhouse into spine.
- Curve back shaping a letter C.
- Keep arms in sleep walking position.
- Maintain C curve.
- Exhale.
- Reach arms forward and upper portion of torso while maintaining contraction.
- Your hip bones should be over your sit bones.
- Inhale.
- Roll back up and sit tall.

- Exhale.
- Repeat 3 times.
Neck Roll

- Prone.

- Look slowly side to side keeping shoulders down.

- Come back to centre each time.

- Repeat twice.
Single Leg Kick

Control, coordination and flexibility in upper chest and thighs, requires activation of the powerhouse.

Starting position:

- Prone.
- Arms bent, elbows beneath shoulders, hands closed in a fist.
- Raise chest.
- Legs straight against mat.

Start:

- Alternately bend each leg, reaching with the heel towards buttocks.

- Kick twice.

- Activate powerhouse to pull abs into spine and move legs.
- 5 sets.
Little Piece of Heaven

*Releases lower back.*

Starting position:

- Kneel with rounded back, arms extended out in front.
- Stretch lower back.
- Repeat 5 sets.
Saw

*Stretches the hamstrings, and the entire side from the waist up.*

Starting position:

- Seated with legs long against the mat, shoulder length apart, extend arms to the sides.

- Pull powerhouse into lower back.

Start:

- Exhale and press buttock to floor.
- Use powerhouse to twist slowly from waist not hips.
- Stretch body forward over leg.

- Reach as far as possible!!
- Repeat 4 sets.
Neck Pull

*Strengthens powerhouse and improves posture.*

Starting position:

- Supine.
- Pull belly button towards spine.
- Hands behind head, elbows pointing out.

Start:

- Feet flexed.
- Legs hip width apart.
- Inhale as you lift up your head and bring chin to chest.
- Continue motion slowly.

- Roll body up all the way until elbows are pointed down to the floor.
• As you come up lengthen the spine.

• Repeat 5 times.
Spine Twists

To improve posture by loosening the spine and increasing flexibility in the hips and waist.

Starting position:

- Sit up tall, legs extended straight and arms outstretched in front of you.

Start:

- Exhale and slowly twist from waist to your right side.
- Left hand remains still facing forward while right hand twists with torso as one unit.

- Ideally both hands should be in straight line once completed twist.
- Repeat 3 sets.
Astronaut

Helps strengthen various muscles used during delivery.

Starting position:

- Sitting position, legs flexed with feet flat to floor, hands underneath back of thighs, round back.

Start:

- Release arms forward and hold for 5 seconds.

- Place hands back under thighs and rest for five counts.
- Release arms forwards and slowly move to the side, hold for 5 counts.
- Repeat for 2 more times.
Mermaid

*Gives baby more room by opening up the rib cage and stretching the waist.*

Starting position:

- Sit on left hip with knees bent and facing forwards.
- Right knee and right foot on top of left knee and left foot.
- Hold right ankle with right hand.
- Stretch left arm straight up above shoulder.
- Activate powerhouse.

Start:

- Let left arm fall over the head and reach body towards the right side.
• Extend left arm straight up again and reach with left hand down to the mat with fingers pointing away from you.

![Image](image1.jpg)

• Stretch out the left side as far as you can and come back to centre.

![Image](image2.jpg)

• Repeat on other side.
Can-can

For sliming and creating definition in your waist line and stretching lower back muscles.

Starting position:

- Seated leaning on your hands with torso inclined at 45 degree angle.
- Bend knees in towards you.
- Place toes on floor, keeping legs and ankles together.

Start:

- Let your legs fall to the right side so that you are mainly on the right hip.
- Bring them back to the centre and do the same to the left.
- Repeat twice.
**Leg Pull Down**

*For co-ordination and balance. Stretches Achilles tendon and calf muscles.*

**Starting position:**

- Push up position legs together.
- Hands beneath shoulders with finger tips facing forwards.
- Powerhouse pulled tight into your spine.

Start:

- Push right heel back as your leg extends out from the hip.
- Come back on the ball of your foot.
- Heel over toes, as you bring the leg down.

Repeat 3 times on both legs.
Leg Pull Up

*Good for abs, triceps and will help balance.*

Starting position:

- Hands underneath shoulders, fingers facing out.
- Activate powerhouse.
- Legs together and rest on your heels.

Start:

- Inhale and raise right leg upward and towards you.
- Exhale as you bring your leg down.
- Lift pelvis up higher as you come down without letting it fall.
- Repeat 3 times on each side.
Push Ups

Starting position:

- Stand tall at the end of the mat.

Start:

- Let the weight of the head bring it towards the mat along with the rest of the body curling down vertebrae by vertebrae.
• Walk your hands out on the mat, making an A with your body until entire body is flat in push up position.

• Inhale easing body down to mat, exhale as you push up.

• Repeat 5 times.
Rowing 5

To improve posture and create more room between the shoulder blades. Helps release tension in the shoulders.

Starting position:

- Sit cross legged.
- Hands behind your head bend elbows and place diamond shape at nape of neck.

- Lean forwards.

Start:

- Exhale
- Stretch arms up parallel to the line of your straight back.
- Dumbbells can be used for the same movement.

- Inhale as you bend your elbows back.
Rowing 6

For muscle tone in upper arms and will improve posture as well.

Starting position:

- Sitting cross legged.
- Sit up taller, straighten spine, pulling scapula down.
- Can use dumbbells.

Start:

- With arms at side bend elbows slightly so arms have small curve.

- Inhale.
- Bring arms out in front of you in hugging position.

- Exhale.
- Bring arms back.
- Repeat 4 times reversing breathing.
Rowing 3

Promotes proper breathing and enhances coordination and improves posture.

Starting position:

- Sit up straight legs extended in front of you feet pointing.
- Palms facing mat, elbows behind you keeping the arms at chest level.

Start:

- Inhale bringing arms into sleep walking position.
- Exhale bringing hands down to thighs.
- Exhale while taking arms up.

- Back to first position.
- Repeat 3-5 times.
Rowing 4

Promotes better sense of balance and enhances flexibility.

Starting position:

- Sit up tall with arms by your sides and palms pressing down.
- Legs stretched out long in front of you.
- Feet flexed.

Start:

- Round your back and drop your head.
- Slide hand along floor toward as far as you can.
- Roll the spine back up reaching with your arms forward until the spine becomes straight.
- Press arms open release arms and back.
- Return to starting position.
- Repeat 20 times.
Neck Stretch

Stretches the neck muscles especially the Trapezius and the Levator Scapulae

Starting position:

- Sit up straight leg crossed.

Start:

- Extend left arm straight toward the ceiling.
- Curve your arm over your head and gently pull head toward right shoulder.
- Come back to the centre.
- Turn head towards your right shoulder pointing your nose towards your armpit.
- Bring your hand over your head and gently weigh your head down.
- Pull into your powerhouse and deepen your stretch.
- Repeat on the other side.
- Repeat 3 times.
Total Buttock Workout

Firms buttocks.

Starting position:

- Supine feet against the wall, legs at 45 degree angle.
- Put a ball between your knees and squeeze for 10 counts.
- Squeeze buttocks together.
- Scoot yourself forward to reach 90 degree angle.

Start:

- Squeeze your buttocks and scoop up your hips.
- Scoop pelvis up towards forehead without arching your back.

- Release and come down vertebrae by vertebrae.
- Repeat 20 times.
Rolling Down the Wall

*Stretches lower back.*

Starting position:

- Standing position back against the wall.
- Feet hip width apart one foot away from the wall.
- Feel spine against the wall.

Start:

- Let your head drop forward along with your neck.
- Stretch neck an upper back.
- Activate powerhouse.
- Relax entire upper body.
- You may bend your knees slightly.
- Scoop the pelvis beneath you.
- Slide your pelvis up the wall as you straighten your legs.
- Press lower back against the wall pulling powerhouse as you roll up vertebrae by vertebrae until you are upright.
- Repeat 3 times.
THE SECOND TRIMESTER:

Focus on:

- Keeping the abdominals strong.
- Pelvic floor exercises especially focusing on pelvic stability.
- Exercises that keep the body symmetrical.
- Arm strengthening.
- Squatting exercises.
- Exercises for lower back stability.
- Spinal stretches (gentle).
- Postural exercises.
- Exercises in four point kneeling.

Specifically Avoid:

- Exercises which involve trunk flexion such as curl ups, single leg stretch or the hundred: this is because, as the pregnancy progresses, the abdominals separate to allow room for the baby and uterus to grow.
- Avoid overstretching as the body will be prone to instability.
- Avoid exercises that put pressure on the pubic bone.
- From about 16 weeks on avoid lying on your back: supine hypertensive syndrome which results in dizziness and low blood pressure caused by the weight of the uterus compressing the vena cava (the largest vein in the trunk) and so restricting blood flow to the heart. Some of the beginners exercises, which are normally done lying on the mat, may be adapted to a seated or standing position. If a few supine exercises are included, change position after 3 minutes and keep limbs moving whilst supine.
- Single leg weight bearing.
- Prone exercises after 24 weeks or as soon as it becomes uncomfortable.
- Unstable balance exercises.
- Unsupported back bends.
- Sharp percussive movements.
- Jumping.
WORKOUT:

The following exercises are the same as the first trimester. Please refer to the above instructions.

- Single Leg Circles
- Single Straight Leg
- Spine Stretch Forward
- Neck Roll
- Saw
- Astronaut
- Mermaid
- Can-Can
- Rowing 5
- Rowing 6
- Rowing 3
- Rowing 4
- Rolling Down the Wall
- Little Peace of Heaven
- Total Buttock Workout
**Modified Roll-Ups**

*Stretches the lower back and will help put you in touch with the powerhouse.*

**Starting position:**

- Sitting up tall, feet flat on the mat, knees bended.
- Place the palms of the hands underneath thighs, elbows pointing out.

**Start:**

- Activate the powerhouse.
- Curve your lower back into the shape of a C until arms are straight.
- Pull back with your arms and powerhouse NOT with your back.

- Repeat 6-8 times.
Chest Expansion

Starting position:

- Kneel on the mat, legs hip-width apart.
- Arms extended forward, straight spine.

Start:

- Push arms straight back as far as they will go as if you are pushing wet cement.
- Hold the position.
- Keep shoulders down, look to the right, centre and left.
Repeat 5-10 times.
Bow

Starting position:

- Kneel on all fours.
- Hands placed underneath shoulder joints, knees placed underneath hip joints.
- Back in neutral position.
- Head is leveled and eyes are focused directly in between your hands.

Start:

- Inhale.
- Exhale as you straighten your leg behind you.
- Change sides.
- Do this as well with your arms.
- Repeat 3-5 times.
Squats

To strengthen your leg muscles, increases pelvic opening providing more room for baby to descend

Starting position:

- Stand with your feet about two feet apart and toes turned comfortably out.

Start:

- Slowly bend your knees, keeping your back flat.
- Keep your knees over your toes - don't let them roll in.
- Rise slowly, concentrating on the leg muscles as you push upward.
- Repeat 5 times, increase to 20 as you get fitter. To further advance this exercise, stay down for 15 to 30 seconds, then rise up slowly.
- Keep your heels flat during the entire movement.
- Never lower your buttocks past your knees.
- You can hold weights in your hand to increase the intensity of this exercise
Legs Against the Wall

To rest legs and back, good to end the session.

Starting position:

- Make sure buttocks remain solidly on the mat.
- Relax and hold the position for less than 5 minutes.
THE THIRD TRIMESTER:

The advice given above for the second trimester is also relevant during this later stage of your pregnancy.

Other exercises or options to focus on:

- Exercises to relax the pelvic floor in readiness for the delivery of the baby.
- Exercises in 4 point kneeling position as this position is useful in these later stages of pregnancy as it helps position the baby for the birth. This position is also beneficial as it takes weight off the pelvic floor and helps to increase perineum circulation.
- Changing your position a lot during the workout as one position may become uncomfortable quickly.
- Beginners exercises adapted to a sitting or standing position by a wall.
- Gentle stretches (these should feel good!).
- Arm exercises.
- Supported back bends (such as over a bolster).
- Stability exercises for your lower back and pelvis.
- Pelvic floor exercises.
- Breathing exercises.
- Thigh strengthening exercises (though not a deep squat in the last 4-6 weeks of pregnancy, as this may induce labor).

Avoid:

- As per second trimester.
- Deep squats during the last 4-6 weeks of pregnancy (increases pressure on the cervix and may induce labour).
- Exercises on one leg or with legs apart (lunges, splits).
WORKOUT:

The following exercises are the same as the first or second trimester. Please refer to the above instructions.

- Modified Roll Ups
- Spine Stretch Forward
- Saw
- The Astronaut
- The Mermaid
- Chest Expansion
- Rowing 6
- Neck Stretch
- Little Peace of Heaven
- Squats
- Bow
Modified Neck Roll

Start:

- Sit crossed-legged.
- Rest hands on thighs.
- Inhale and tilt your right ear toward your right shoulder.

- Sweep your head to your left until left ear is facing the left shoulder.
- Reverse the circle and repeat twice.
References


