

FUNCTIONAL PREGNANCY

What you need to know before starting the programme

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Introduction ABOUT FP



During my MSc I was given an assignment to write an exercise programme for a women suffering from pelvic girdle pain during pregnancy. Whilst researching this I discovered how much of a minefield of misinformation and judgement exercising during pregnancy can be. It also opened my eyes to the issues that can arise such as incontinence, prolapse and diastasis recti, and how stagnant the advice is regarding pelvic floor training. I wanted to make a programme that is evidence based, addresses these issues head-on, and incorporates functional movement into training the core and pelvic floor. So here it is!

With daily pelvic floor exercises and three 20-30 minute core sessions per week, this is designed to be added in alongside your normal training, to ensure you are ready for whatever this pregnancy throws at you!

Section 1

IS IT SAFE?

For most women, exercise is completely safe during pregnancy. There are a few rare conditions where it may not be advised

REASONS NOT TO EXERCISE

If you have any of the following, exercise is NOT recommended during pregnancy:

- Ruptured membranes
- Premature labour
- Unexplained persistent vaginal bleeding
- Placenta praevia after 26 weeks' gestation
- Pre-eclampsia
- Cervical insufficiency/cerclage
- Intrauterine growth restriction
- High-order multiple pregnancy (eg, triplets)
- Uncontrolled type I diabetes
- Uncontrolled hypertension
- Uncontrolled thyroid disease
- Other serious cardiovascular, respiratory, or systemic disorder

POSSIBLE REASONS NOT TO EXERCISE

Discuss with your doctor before progressing if you have any of the following:

- Recurrent pregnancy loss
- Gestational hypertension
- A history of spontaneous preterm birth
- Mild/moderate cardiovascular or respiratory disease
- Symptomatic anaemia
- Malnutrition or eating disorder
- Twin pregnancy after the 28th week
- Other significant medical conditions

Section 1

IS IT SAFE?

REASONS TO STOP EXERCISING

If any of the following occur, you should stop physical activity and consult a healthcare provider:

- Persistent excessive shortness of breath that does not resolve on rest
- Severe chest pain
- Regular and painful uterine contractions
- Vaginal bleeding
- Persistent loss of fluid from the vagina indicating rupture of the membranes
- Persistent dizziness or faintness that does not resolve on rest
- Headache
- Calf pain or swelling



Section 2

HOW TO ADAPT TRAINING

Physical activity is really important during pregnancy, but there are a few key points to keep in mind, to help you adapt and stay healthy whilst also staying active



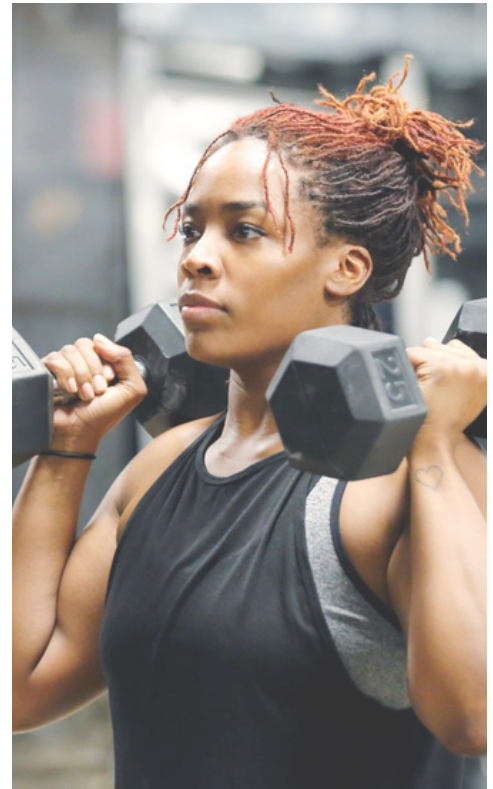
- Avoid overheating, especially in first trimester
- Avoid activities which involve physical contact or danger of falling
- Avoid scuba diving
- Those living below 2500m should avoid physical activity at high altitude (>2500m)
- Keep heart rate (HR) at <90% max (use a HR watch/chest strap)
- Maintain adequate nutrition and hydration—drink water before, during and after physical activity
- Know the reasons to stop physical activity and consult a qualified healthcare provider immediately if they occur
- Avoid valsava (big breath and hold)
- Avoid pressing on belly (belts, sandbags)
- Avoid supine exercises from 28 weeks, or if it causes dizziness at any time
- Learn to contract the pelvic floor before and during heavy lifting
- Identify and avoid coning (generally late 2nd trimester- around week 20 onwards)
 - Full plank/push up position
 - Hanging from bar
 - Sit ups from lying
 - Skiing

Section 3

WHAT IS INCLUDED

- 33 weeks of programming delivered straight to your phone via the Fitr app
- Daily pelvic floor work, with weekly progressions
- 3x 20-30 minute sessions per week focusing on building a strong core and pelvic floor
- Video library of movements for reference

- A 3D movement bias to target these areas in all planes of motion
- Workouts are designed to be added in alongside your normal classes or programming



Designed specifically for pregnancy, with appropriate progression from the first to second and third trimester, with scaling options and key considerations such as abdominal coning taken into account

Section 4

BEFORE YOU START

Some key info and concepts about the programming

We strongly advise seeing a pelvic floor physio to assess your pelvic floor function before starting this programme

- There are 3 main sessions per week. These are written for Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday but they can be fitted into your week whenever works best for you
- None of this programme should be done 'for time'. The focus is always quality movement. Rest as needed. We maximise results through good form and proper engagement of the target areas
- Weights are not prescribed, as particularly during pregnancy what works for one person will be very different for another. Weights should be chosen that make the movement challenging, but not above 70-80% of max effort. The same applies to rep ranges given
- The videos for each exercise will first give a demonstration of the movement, and then run through the key pointers to focus on for that movement
- You will receive daily pelvic floor work- the 'Squeezy' app or similar can help remind you to do this. The focus here is not just on the squeeze, but also on learning how to relax your pelvic floor



Section 5

FAQS

1 Who is the programme for?

- Pregnant women who are used to strength and conditioning training
- This could be CrossFit, functional fitness, weightlifting, HIIT, etc.

2 What equipment is needed?

- Essential
 - Pair of dumbbells
 - PVC pipe or broomstick handle
 - Set of low rings or trx
 - Box or step
 - Mat or cushion
 - Resistance band
- Optional
 - Kettlebell
 - Pull up bar
 - Barbell
 - Slamball

3 What makes this programme different?

- Not just Kegels- 3D movement bias, focused on training the core and PF in all planes of movement
- Designed specifically for pregnant women who are used to training - women with a higher fitness level who are used to lifting weights
- Evidence-based and written by healthcare professionals who are also athletes



Section 5

FAQS

4 I'm 'x' weeks pregnant- can I start now?

- The programme is available to buy in blocks, so it can be started at any point during your pregnancy
 - Block 1- weeks 6-12
 - Block 2- weeks 13-19
 - Block 3- weeks 20-27
 - Block 4- weeks 28-38+

5 How much does it cost?

- Pay per block
 - Block 1- £70
 - Block 2- £70
 - Block 3- £80
 - Block 4- £110
- Pay for the full 33 week programme up front
 - £310

Sample week
SECOND TRIMESTER

Watch this space...

ACCESS THE
PROGRAMME VIA
THE FITR APP

exercisedoc.fitr.training/t/120377/

exercisedoc.org

[@functionalpregnancy](https://functionalpregnancy)

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