



POST NATAL INFORMATION GUIDE

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WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF EXERCISING AFTER I HAVE HAD MY BABY?

- It helps strengthen and tone abdominal muscles and reduce separation. Always ensure you are exercising correctly (follow our post natal beginner exercises and build up your strength slowly).
- It boosts energy even when you are feeling most fatigued from disturbed sleep and breast-feeding.
- It promotes better sleep. Even if sleep is shorter, the quality can be improved.
- It can help prevent and manage postpartum depression symptoms.
- It relieves stress and anxiety symptoms.
- It can help you lose any extra weight that you may have gained during pregnancy.

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WHEN CAN I START EXERCISING?

As Physiotherapists, we recommend that you start resuming gentle pelvic floor exercises as soon as you have had your baby if your labour was straightforward with no complications. If this was not the case, seek additional advice from a health professional before commencing.

Our Specialist Pilates Online postnatal videos will guide you step by step through the forthcoming days, weeks and months following birth to help you regain muscle control, strength, balance and good posture.

TOP TIPS FOR MAXIMUM COMFORT WHEN YOU EXERCISE AT HOME POST NATALLY

Wear loose fitting and comfortable clothing, especially if you have a C-section scar line.

Perform your exercises once you have breast fed so your baby is content and you feel more comfortable exercising on your side or on your back.

If you want to perform some gentle exercises whilst your baby is breast-feeding you could carry out exercises on your side, so you lay on your left side whilst your baby feeds on the left breast. **Always ensure your baby is safe and not compromised if first if choosing to do this.**

Ensure you have a supportive bra, particularly if you resume jogging/running.

Maintain hydration throughout, **aiming to drink 8 glasses of water a day.**

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WHAT ARE THE SIGNS THAT I AM NOT READY TO RETURN TO RUNNING OR SPORT?

If you ever leak urine (or faecal material) when working out

If you experience lower back or pelvic pain at rest, when trying to run or after any form other form of exercise that increases your heart rate. **This can include house work.**

If you feel unstable in the core or like you're 'falling-out at the front' when you perform any exercise.

If your body shakes or trembles during any move or hold.

If there is bulging, straining, protrusion or doming anywhere within your abdomen or pelvic floor when you work out.

As Physiotherapists we recommend that you return to running gradually over a course of 1 year from birth in a phased, gradual and tailored way. **Our Specialist Pilates Online post-natal videos can help you with this.**

HOW MUCH EXERCISE SHOULD I DO AFTER BIRTH?

Government guidelines recommend 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity exercise. This can be broken down into 10-minute blocks that may fit better into your busy 'new mum' schedule or up to 30 minutes on 5 days of the week. **Moderate intensity exercise enables an increase in heart rate but still allows you to hold a conversation,** so exercise can include vigorous tasks such as brisk walking to the shops and housework such as hoovering too.

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DOES IT MATTER IF I HAD A C-SECTION OR VAGINAL BIRTH?

You can resume exercises soon after either of these methods of birth. Recommendations for C-sections include no heavy lifting or driving for 6 weeks until your postnatal check and this also applies to exercise. For both methods, however, you can resume gentle pelvic floor wakening exercise straight away.

See our Specialist Pilates Online pelvic floor beginner exercises to get you started.

WHEN CAN I START EXERCISING AFTER BIRTH?

A lot of guidance suggests waiting until your 6-week check-up. If you already have children, you will likely have to do some activity before structured exercise. The Specialist Pilates Online programme offers a short routine to gently waken the pelvic floor and abdominals soon after birth (some guides suggest no pelvic floor engagement until you have had your first urination following birth to avoid UTI) so that you can begin your progressive recovery.

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AUTHORS

This guide has been written by our Specialist Pilates Online Physiotherapists based on their clinical experience, specialist background, and Masters level training.

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