

## Relieving stress and being active

### Relieving stress: What you can do

- If you're really stressed and feel like you can't cope, tell your health care provider right away.
- Figure out what's making you stressed and talk to your partner, a friend or your health care provider about it. Cut back on activities you don't need to do.
- Stay healthy and fit. Eat healthy foods, get plenty of sleep and do something active every day (with your health care provider's OK).
- Know that the discomforts of pregnancy don't last forever. Ask your provider how to handle these discomforts.
- Have a good support network, including your partner, family and friends. Ask your provider about resources in the community that may be able to help. Ask for help from people you trust and accept help when they offer.
- Try relaxation activities, like prenatal yoga or meditation.
- Take a childbirth education class so you know what to expect during labor and birth.
- If you're working, talk to your supervisor about working during pregnancy. Make plans together to get ready for time away from work for prenatal care visits and after your baby is born.

### Being active: What you can do

- Talk to your provider about your exercise plans before you start. If you haven't exercised before, start slowly.
- Do something active every day. You don't have to go to a gym to be active. Things like walking, vacuuming and yardwork are good, too.

- Don't do activities, like high-impact aerobics or jogging, that involve jumping or put stress on joints, especially in the last 3 months of pregnancy.
- Don't get overheated, especially during the first trimester. Stop doing an activity when you feel tired.
- Drink plenty of water before and during activities.
- Stretch before and after exercise to increase your strength and flexibility.
- Don't do activities that make you lie on your back after the first trimester because it can reduce blood flow to the uterus (womb).
- Don't use saunas or whirlpools, especially in the first trimester.

### Can all pregnant women be physically active?

Most can, but not all. Ask your health care provider if it's OK for you to be active if you:

- Are overweight or underweight
- Have high blood pressure
- Have diabetes
- Have anemia
- Are pregnant with twins, triplets or more



*watch & learn*

Watch videos on how to have a healthy pregnancy at: [marchofdimes.org/videos](https://marchofdimes.org/videos)

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