**Exercise During Pregnancy**

ACOG Bulletin 267/FAQ Sheet 119

* Previously inactive women and those with medical complications should be evaluated by their primary prenatal care provider before recommendations for physical activity participation during pregnancy are made. Be sure to drink plenty of water, especially when exercising.
* If there are no medical or obstetrical complications, thirty minutes or more of moderate exercise daily on most, if not every day of the week, is recommended for pregnant women. If it has been awhile since you exercised, you may want to start with 5 minutes and then increase weekly.
* However, recreational and competitive athletes with uncomplicated pregnancies can remain active during pregnancy and should modify their usual exercise routine as medically indicated.
* Physically active women with a history of or risk for preterm labor or fetal growth restriction should be advised to reduce activity in the second and third trimesters.
* Safe forms of exercise during pregnancy include:
* Walking
* Swimming
* Cycling
* Aerobics
* Each recreational sport activity should be reviewed individually for its potential risk. Generally, the following forms of exercise should be avoided:
  + After the first trimester, avoid any exercises on your back
* Contact sports, such as hockey, basketball and soccer
* Scuba diving should be avoided during pregnancy because the fetus is a risk for decomposition sickness due to the fetal circulation system.
* Activities with a high risk of falling or those with a high risk for abdominal trauma should be avoided such as, gymnastics, water skiing, downhill snow skiing, horseback riding and racquet sports.
  + Avoid brisk exercises in hot, humid weather or when you have a fever.
* Warning signs to consult with their primary care provider and terminate exercise during pregnancy include:
* Amniotic fluid leakage
* Muscle weakness
* Calf pain or swelling
* Preterm labor
* Chest pain
* Increased shortness of breath
* Regular uterine contractions
* Decreased fetal movement
* Vaginal bleeding
* Dizziness or faint feeling
* Headache