



ACOG Exercise Recommendations

Provider Editions

Core Exercise Recommendation

Encourage ≥ 150 minutes/week of moderate-intensity aerobic activity
Can be divided into 30 minutes on most days or shorter sessions (10–15 minutes)
Suitable for most uncomplicated pregnancies with medical clearance when appropriate

Intensity Guidance (“Talk Test”)

Moderate intensity = Increased heart rate and light sweating
Able to talk but not sing comfortably
Avoid overexertion; encourage self-regulation of intensity

Providers should routinely suggest:

Walking (first-line recommendation). Swimming / water aerobics, Stationary cycling, Prenatal yoga or modified Pilates, Light resistance / strength training

Exercise Type Recommendations

Encourage combined aerobic + strength training
Focus on consistency over intensity
Emphasize gradual progression for previously inactive patients

Remember to:

Assess baseline activity level at prenatal visits
Provide individualized recommendations based on risk status
Reinforce that routine activity restriction is not recommended without medical indication
Reassess exercise habits throughout pregnancy

Warning Signs to Stop Exercise

Vaginal bleeding, Dizziness or fainting, Chest pain or shortness of breath before exertion, Uterine contractions, Fluid leakage, Severe headache or leg swelling/pain

Provider Best Practices

Normalize exercise as part of prenatal care
Address barriers (fatigue, time, discomfort, safety concerns)
Encourage gradual, realistic activity goals
Reinforce benefits for both maternal and fetal health
Revisit counseling at each prenatal visit

“For most pregnancies, staying active is safe, recommended, and beneficial. The goal is consistent, moderate movement—not perfection.”