THE GOLDEN RULES

1. Give yourself a stronger base of support by standing with your feet slightly wider apart to allow for your new center of gravity.

2. The pregnancy hormone relaxin is acting to soften all your connective tissue, so don't put strain on your joints by using excessive ROM.

3. Keep the trunk upright – don't lean back. Engage the abs to support the pelvis and avoid over-extending the lower back.

4. Don't worry about keeping up with the class – those other people aren't pregnant! Work at your own pace, adjust your weights and work within shorter ROM as your pregnancy progresses.

Talk to your BODYPUMP™ instructor if you have any questions about your technique or modifications and talk to your doctor if you have any problems.

References

1. Antal, R and Sherman, C. Exercise during pregnancy: Safe and beneficial for most. The Physician and Sports Medicine, 1995; 27 (8)

BODYPUMP™ AND PREGNANCY

BODYPUMP™ is a great way for you to maintain a healthy, strong, toned body during and after your pregnancy.

Please make sure you have been cleared by your doctor or lead caregiver before you start any fitness regime.

BODYPUMP™ is a non-impact strength endurance program which uses relatively light weights. Your medical adviser will determine whether this program is suitable for you. Some health conditions during pregnancy can make any exercise unsafe or uncomfortable.

The progression of pregnancy is split into three phases, known as trimesters. Each trimester brings its own unique physical considerations.

FIRST TRIMESTER

This is the phase where many women feel tired and some will experience morning sickness and nausea—sometimes all day. This phase is crucial in fetal development, so excessive core body temperatures should be avoided.

The release of the pregnancy hormone ‘relaxin’ also begins during this phase, increasing laxity in the joints.

**Considerations** | **Exercise Modifications**
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**Biomechanical changes** | Maintain core activation and avoid hyperextending the lumbar spine to support the lower back.
 | Take care when getting on and off the bench. Try not to jackknife by sitting straight up and forward—including roll to the side.
 | Reduce loads in the Squat track and take a wider stance for balance and stability.
 | Reduce loads in the Back and Lunge tracks.
**Physiological changes** | Modify abdominal exercises to heel drops or pelvic tilts, or shift to a kneeling position depending on your comfort.
 | Reduce demands on the cardiovascular system with a general reduction in weight.
 | Avoid lying flat if it’s uncomfortable—use inclined or seated options.
 | Ensure you have plenty of carbohydrates before you exercise.
**Hormone release (relaxin)** | Take care with ROM and alignment.

SECOND AND THIRD TRIMESTERS

For many women, progress in their pregnancy brings an end to morning sickness and a lot more energy. There are gradual increases in body weight and biomechanical changes around the pelvis and lumbar spine as the baby grows.

Breast enlargement will tend to round the shoulders and upper back. Lying flat may become uncomfortable due to increased abdominal pressure.

Demands on blood flow begin to increase with greater blood volume and an increase in resting heart rate. During the last 12 weeks, there is a 50% increase in cardiac output and an extra 45% increase in blood volume.

**Considerations** | **Exercise Modifications**
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Fatigue | Exercise at a moderate intensity (self-paced).
Body temperature | Keep cool and hydrated, avoid exercising in excessively hot climates.
Hormone release (relaxin) | Care with Range(s) of Motion (ROM) and alignment.

**HOW TO MODIFY THIS CLASS DURING YOUR PREGNANCY**

During the class focus on yourself and your baby and work at an intensity that is comfortable for you. We suggest moderate intensities. Choose sensible weights and move seamlessly, i.e. no jerky or jarring movements. Don’t over-exert or work to failure in any exercises and be mindful of your ROM in all exercises.

Pregnancy is not a time to increase your weights.

It’s really important that you breathe evenly during each exercise in class. Holding your breath can affect your blood pressure, especially during overhead movements. If you experience light-headedness, nausea or dizziness, REST, and when you resume the exercise remember to breathe. Alternatively, do an exercise that keeps the weights below your head.

**TRACK MODIFICATIONS IN DETAIL**

**Track 1: Warmup**
Set up with a wider stance than normal. Slighty wider than the hips should be more comfortable and give you more stability.

**Track 2: Legs/Squats**
Take your Squat a little wider here, with feet outside shoulders. This will help you to balance and be more comfortable to Squat. Avoid an excessive curve in your lower back – hyperextension. Focus on drawing your abdominal muscles in.

**Track 3: Chest**
When you work the chest you can incline the bench—it will relieve some abdominal pressure, help circulation and feel more comfortable. Make sure that you secure the bench top safely and take care getting on and off the bench. Roll to the side rather than sitting straight up.

**Track 4: Back/Gluteals/Hamstrings**
As your abdomen grows stand wider for more balance and stability. A great way to get an effective back workout is to use plates. It will give you a good ROM during Rows and will also allow you to Clean & Press keading the plates close to the center line of your body.

It will be difficult to use large weights here but a functional ROM will be achievable. Take care to keep your wrists strong and slightly extended during the Clean phase of the Clean and Press.

Focus closely on rolling the shoulders back and squeezing between the shoulder blades, especially in the third trimester. This will help to maintain strength in your upper back as more load is placed on your posture through larger breasts.

Remember to breathe and, if you feel light-headed, dizzy or nauseous, use the Upright Row as an option instead of the Clean & Press to keep the bar under the head line.