



# PRE AND POST NATAL EXERCISE AT KX PILATES.

## **PRENATAL EXERCISE**

It's fantastic that you're considering KX Pilates at this time in your life, as the benefits of a well-structured exercise program during pregnancy can be beneficial for both mums and bubs. However, it's no secret that we like to do things a little different and our high intensity classes are of a special variety.

If you are new to KX, we ask that you not start our classes until after pregnancy, unless you book into a private one on one session or have been recently exercising.

If there is pain or discomfort, ease off! Exercise during pregnancy should not be about improving muscle tone. It should be about maintaining health, posture and a positive mental attitude.

### **Up to 15 weeks:**

- Have your Obstetrician fill out the Pregnancy Authorisation to Exercise Form and return to us upon arrival to your first class.
- You may continue group classes up to the 15th week, if/when you are beyond 15 weeks, see below.
- Before booking your first group class, please contact your local studio for a list of pre and post-natal trained instructors.
- Please ensure the instructors are informed what week you are up to at the beginning of each class, as modifications of certain exercises will need to be given.

### **Beyond 15 weeks:**

- You cannot attend our group classes after you are 15 weeks along as our group classes are too intense and dynamic and are not appropriate for you or your baby.
- You can continue with a reformer pilates pre/post-natal class or a barre pre/post-natal class (subject to availability). Both of these classes have been designed for those of you expecting right up until birth. They combine strength training, light cardio and gentle stretching appropriate for your body during pregnancy.
- If preferred, Private one on one reformer pilates or barre sessions are also available with our pre/post-natal trained Instructors. These sessions are individually tailored to your changing needs at each stage of your pregnancy.
- Please have your Obstetrician fill out the Pregnancy Authorisation to Exercise Form and return to us upon arrival to your first class.



For all pregnant members, extra guidance and or doctors advice should be sought if you have:

- Diabetes before or during the pregnancy
- High blood pressure or thyroid disease
- Anaemia or blood disorders
- Any cardiac or pulmonary disorders
- A history of premature labour
- Placenta previa where your placenta has implanted completely over, or near your cervix
- Experienced three or more miscarriages
- Experienced cramping, spotting or bleeding during pregnancy
- Been told you're expecting more than one baby.

**General exercise tips during pregnancy:**

- Pelvic floor exercises are very beneficial, but it is just as important to practice releasing/relaxing the pelvic floor as it is to contract it (vary the range of contractions, 100%, 50%, 25% etc. up and down).
- Avoid exercise in a warm/hot environment as core body temperature increases when pregnant.
- Keep well hydrated and avoid exercising on an empty stomach (your glycogen levels may drop too low). Bring a water bottle to class/exercise.
- Wear a supportive bra.
- Avoid ballistic (bouncing) stretching. Your joints are more flexible through elevated levels of the hormone relaxin.
- Avoid holding prolonged positions, as this may increase blood pressure.

**Things to Remember:**

- Always remind the instructor you are pregnant before EVERY class.
- You must avoid abdominal curls (flexing your upper body). This can make your abdominals separate further than they should. As you progress into your 2nd trimester, your abdominals separate naturally.
- Keep your spine mobile.
- Do not over-stretch. The hormone relaxin is released during pregnancy. This can make your joints more flexible (especially applicable to women who are already very flexible).
- Avoid squeezing hard on fitness circles. These can create too much pressure on your pelvis. Slow controlled shallow pulses are best.
- Avoid painful movements and positions. If you are feeling pain in your tailbone, or feel pubic pain, stop exercising immediately.
- Listen to your body! If you feel dizzy, nauseous, experience numbness, pins and needles, or it doesn't feel right in any other way, please stop!!



## KX PILATES. PRE/POST-NATAL.

- Avoid static (held) positions for long periods. This may increase blood pressure, so keep moving.
- Adhere to the five-minute rule. Never spend more than five minutes lying on your back at any one time, particularly in the second and third trimester. Roll onto your left side when laying down and coming up.
- Check alignment. Neutral pelvic position will constantly be changing throughout your pregnancy so constantly check your alignment and adjust accordingly.
- Remember the general rule, if there is pain or discomfort ease off! Remember that each pregnancy is individual. Remember there will always be cases that don't fit the norm.

### **First Trimester**

You can pretty much do everything in the first trimester. However, please keep your head down when lying on your back and **DO NOT** overload on springs/resistance.

### **Second & Third Trimester**

You can...

- Exercise when the spine is in neutral position (on a block/box for seated work).
- Perform lots of seated arm work and back and chest. (So you have strength to hold baby!)
- Perform Footwork – again, do not overload on your springs/resistance!
- Place feet in straps – only perform small range of movement.
- Articulate your spine – cat stretches are recommended.
- Watch your balance, especially in the third trimester.

DO NOT...

- Lie on your stomach.
- Overload on springs/resistance.
- Cross your legs too close to your chest.
- Execute abdominal curls lying on your back.
- Perform hip rolls or hip lifts - watch for supine hypertensive syndrome, where baby lies on the vena cava. This prevents normal circulation of blood back to the heart. This may lead to a lack of oxygen in the mother's blood system that in turn affects the baby's blood supply.
- Lay or lie down on your back too long. Every 5 minutes roll on your side and pull yourself up using your hands.



## **POSTNATAL EXERCISE**

### **Post Pregnancy**

Our reformer pilates and barre classes are great ways for new mothers to get back in shape after pregnancy and give themselves some much needed 'me' time, following clearance from your GP or Obstetrician. It is also strongly recommended that whenever you start back at KX after a break, ensure you begin again in a Beginner class.

For those of you wanting to train with your baby, we have both a Barre Mums and Bubs and Pilates Mums and Bubs class available for you. Please ensure you complete the following before attending your first class:

- Ask your GP Obstetrician to complete a clearance to exercise letter.
- Complete our Post Natal Exercise Questionnaire.

### **Barre Mums & Bubs**

A class for mothers with babies up to 12 months which focuses on reconditioning the body after birth. The first half of the class will be core focused where mums will perform pilates based exercises on a mat with their babies next to them. The second half of the class will be standing at the barre performing lower body strength and toning based exercises where mums have the option to hold their babies with use of their baby carriers.

### **Pilates Mums & Bubs**

A class for mothers with babies in capsules or on a mat next to the reformer up to 6 months (up to crawling). With the use of a reformer, this class specialises in regaining your strength and rebuilding your pre baby body.

### **Tips before you start training:**

- Ensure that bleeding has stopped.
- Even with no complications, ONLY fundamental exercises should be performed with a very gradual progression. Some women may find it hard to connect pelvic floor. Pilates advises you to concentrate on overall corset contraction and stability in neutral and closed chain.
- If the delivery has involved complications, medical clearance must be obtained before starting back.
- Contraction of the pelvic floor is extremely important and can be completed out of class as well as in.
- The hormone Relaxin stays in the body for about 6 months or till breastfeeding stops. Therefore, watch your mobility and stability after pregnancy (particularly with flexion and rotation).
- Watch stability exercises where the back is unstable, e.g. Plank, push up.