

Pregnancy & Postpartum Performance Training Guide



This guidebook provides detailed physical training and general wellness recommendations for pregnant and postpartum Airmen and Guardians.



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Pregnancy & Postpartum Performance Training Guide

Overview:

Congratulations! This is an exciting time in your life. This guidebook provides detailed physical training and general wellness recommendations for pregnant and postpartum Airmen and Guardians. Every facet of wellness (spiritual, mental, physical, and nutritional) is integral in maintaining your overall health. As you progress through the stages of pregnancy this guidebook will help you understand changes that will be taking place and aid in making lifestyle choices. The physical training guidance will address what components should be included in safe and effective workouts during pregnancy and the postpartum period and will include example exercises and workouts. Nutrition guidelines will address healthy eating guidelines, recommended food choices and foods to avoid.

You are encouraged to seek out additional support from your medical team and leadership throughout this journey to develop and maintain optimal health.

Disclaimer

The views expressed are those of the authors and do not reflect the views of the Department of Defense, Department of the Air Force, or the U.S. Government. This guide is also not intended for specific medical guidance and individuals should seek clearance from their medical provider prior to making drastic changes to their exercise program.

Disclosure

This certifies the authors, families, and spouses/partners do not have any financial relationships with any industry that is relevant to the subject matters discussed in this handout.

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Safety Considerations:

Please consult and be cleared by your medical provider before starting or continuing this program, or if any adverse reactions or setbacks occur.

Recommendations

- Drink plenty of water and wear loose fitting clothes; Dehydration can lead to fatigue, dizziness, and other complications (i.e. premature labor).
- Use the “talk test” or the rate of perceived exertion (RPE) scale. You should be able to speak a sentence without having to pause for breath.
- Progress sets/reps/exercises as tolerated (pain free)
- Adjust exercises/sessions as needed with the eventual goal of 30 minutes of exercise per day.

Recommended to Avoid During Pregnancy

- Exercise in high heat and humidity. See local guidance on weather restrictions.
- Participation or use of hot sauna, hot tub, or hot yoga
- Contact sports or any activity that involves a greater chance of falling
- Exercises on the back past 20 weeks unless cleared by medical provider
- Olympic or competitive lifting past about 20 weeks unless cleared by medical provider

	STOP exercising and contact medical provider	Pause activity/exercise and REST	Ask for a PT Referral
Signs/Symptoms	Swelling of face and hands	Difficulty breathing/Shortness of breath (before exertion)	Pain/Discomfort
	Severe headaches	Nausea Dizzy or lightheaded (if persistent contact medical provider)	Incontinence
	Palpitations or chest pain	Vomiting (if persistent contact medial provider)	Heaviness in the vagina
	Difficulty walking because of pain/calf pain or swelling	Excessive muscle soreness or pain	Bulging or coning of the stomach
	Vaginal bleeding or excessive discharge	Fatigue	Pelvic pressure
	Amniotic Fluid Leakage	Sudden sharp pain	
Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sit down and drink water until symptoms subside or resume exercise the next day. • When restarting, make sure to include longer rest breaks between sets and/or exercises. • If symptoms continue with restarting exercise, contact medical provider. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return to a pain free range of motion for exercises. If member has already attempted this, then proceed with a referral. • Can continue to work out as long as symptoms don't increase. Adjust exercises as tolerated.

*PT (Physical Therapist specifically specializing in Pelvic Health)

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Physical Concerns Throughout Pregnancy

This is not an exhaustive list but are common pelvic floor symptoms that you may experience during pregnancy. If you have any of the following symptoms, please notify your medical provider to discuss a referral to a physical therapist who specializes in pelvic health that may provide symptom relief.

- Feeling heaviness or pulling in your pelvis.
- Problems with leaking urine or feces/incontinence.
- Feeling like your bladder doesn't fully empty when you use the bathroom.
- Constipation and hemorrhoids.
- Pain in your lower back or pelvis.
- Pain at the pubic bone, including when you are walking, going up stairs, moving in bed, and shifting weight from one leg to the other (Symphysis Pubis Dysfunction).
- Round ligament pain.

You will learn further about specific physical changes that occur during each trimester and postpartum as you progress through each section.

Spiritual Readiness

Consider journaling or reflecting on these topics and questions throughout your pregnancy.

Identity- “Who am I?”

- What do you believe it means to be a parent?
- What kind of parent do you want to be?
- How high does parenthood rank in your life (i.e. in comparison to work, marriage, relationships, etc.)? Explain why.

Community- “With whom do I spend my life?”

- Who is the best parent you know? And why are they exceptional?
- What mature parents do you trust to ask questions for advice, and are you willing to receive it?
- Who can you call to help with your child if/when you are overwhelmed? Explain why.

Hope- “What do I believe about the future?”

- How do you want your children to think about the future (i.e. optimistic, pessimistic, realistic, or a combination of all)? Why?
- How would you explain to your children how you have thrived and struggled with hope in your life?
- What specifically do you want to teach your children about hope?

Legacy- “What will I leave behind?”

- What kind of impact do you want your children to remember most about you?
- If you were to educate on parenthood, what topics would benefit you most?
- What do you believe parenthood looks like after your children become adults?

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Mental Readiness

When should you reach out for help?

- Uncharacteristic forgetfulness
- Disinterested in favorite hobbies
- Exhausted, but having issues staying/falling asleep
- Difficulty with simple decisions/questions
- Difficulty completing simple/mundane tasks or feeling overwhelmed by them
- Loss of appetite
- Low energy
- Increased irritability/more emotional

Specific Signs of Peri/Postpartum Depression and Anxiety

- Can show up 6, 9, or 12 months post partum
- Withdrawing from family and friends
- Difficulty bonding with your baby
- Intense irritability or anger
- Feelings of worthlessness, shame, or guilt
- Thoughts of harming yourself or your baby
- “What if” thoughts that would cause harm to yourself or your baby
- Fear that you’re not a good parent

Mental Readiness Resources

Military One Source

- 1 (800) 342-9647 (up to 12 free sessions with a counselor in the area)
- Website: www.militaryonesource.mil

Military and Family Readiness Center (M&FRC) & Military and Family Life Counselor (MFLC)

- Website: <https://www.afpc.af.mil/Military-and-Family/>

Primary Care Behavior Health (PCBH)

- integrated within local military mental health clinic (phone call or walk in)

Military Chaplain

- Meetings are 100% confidential. Chaplains do not have a duty to warn the command team. In fact, they cannot tell anyone anything an individual discloses but will ensure the member obtains the necessary help

Veteran’s Crisis Line

- 1 (800) 273-8255, then press “1”. Chat online by texting 838255

Air Force Connect App/USSF Guardian One App (Android and iOS from Google Play and Apple App stores)

- Add your place of assignment/employment as a “favorite” and click the “helping center” box for local resources



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First Trimester

Sleep Changes

Largely due to hormonal changes it's normal to feel like you need more sleep. Hormonal changes, nausea, and digestion issues can lead to insomnia. If you are having trouble sleeping, please discuss it with your OBGYN and their medical team.

You may also experience an increase in urinary urgency and may find you have to get up multiple times a night to use the bathroom. It is normal to have to go to the bathroom every 2-4 hours during the day and once during the night. If you find yourself getting up multiple times in the night due to urinary urge and frequency, work with your medical provider for a referral to see a pelvic health occupational therapist or pelvic health physical therapist (PHOT or PHPT).

Cognitive Changes

Changes occur to your body and brain during pregnancy that can impact cognition. You may experience trouble remembering things, concentrating, and difficulty with other executive functions. Experiencing some challenges and differences are a normal part of the process of pregnancy. However, rest assured that neuropsychological assessments comparing pregnant and nonpregnant women show little to no differences in brain function. These lived differences you experience are likely normal. You will often return to the cognitive performance you are used to as your body chemistry readjusts six to eight weeks postpartum. Changes in the amount and depth of your sleep are sometimes linked to remembering, concentrating, and other executive processes. Use to-do lists and write things down to help you remember important tasks, information, and events. It may be helpful to set a “Stop & Check” point before you walk out the door or “close out” a project. This might mean taking a moment to mentally review what you need for the day or to have finished before you go, hit send, or move on to the next task. You might employ habits to help with memorization, like verbal or mental repetition, using mnemonic devices, chunking information into memorable bits, or taking written notes.

For more information check out: https://www.mja.com.au/system/files/issues/208_01/10.5694mja17.00131.pdf

Nutritional Changes

Nutrition Needs:

Consume nutrient dense foods such as fruits, vegetables, low fat dairy products, seafood, eggs, beans and peas, unsalted nuts and seeds, lean meats, poultry, and whole grains. You can get a personalized nutrition plan for the duration of your pregnancy by logging into <https://www.myplate.gov/myplate-plan>.

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First Trimester

Nutritional Changes Continued

Nutrition Issues:

Talk to your provider:

- If you are experiencing weight loss
- About your weight gain goals
- If you are experiencing morning sickness that is impacting your ability to keep down solids or liquids or make yourself eat or drink
- If you are craving items such as ice, raw starches, dirt etc.

Morning Sickness is common but generally decreases in the second trimester. If you are experiencing morning sickness, try:

- Consuming smaller meals more frequently throughout the day
- Sipping on fluids between meals.
- Adjusting the temperature of fluids to see if some are more palatable than others.
- Keeping crackers or other easy to digest foods on your nightstand and eating a small amount before you rise in the morning.
- Having someone else cook for you, to avoid smells and textures during the cooking process can be helpful.

Nutrition Resources:

- Real Food for Pregnancy by Lily Nichols
- Real Food for Gestational Diabetes by Lily Nichols
- Reach out to a registered dietitian

Food Safety:

Proper Food Handling

Clean	Wash hands, work surfaces, and utensils immediately after contact with food.
Separate	Keep foods separate when cooking to avoid cross-contamination.
Cook	Cook to proper temperatures.
Chill	Properly package and chill food once done eating. Do not eat food that has been left out for longer than 2 hours.

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First Trimester

Nutritional Changes Continued

Dietary Considerations:

Increase	Limit	Avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 64-96oz (8-12 cups) of water/day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caffeine consumption <200mg/day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alcohol
<p>Essential fatty acids, linoleic, alpha linoleic and 300mg of long chain polyunsaturated fatty acid docosahexaenoic acid (DHA):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salmon Anchovy Herring Grass Carp 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Albacore tuna, yellow-fin tuna, halibut, and similar fish to 1 serving per week 	<p>Fish high in mercury:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shark Swordfish Mackerel Tile fish
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caloric intake of nutrient dense foods; fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and low fat or fat free dairy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Saturated fat <5-10% of calories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trans Fats
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sodium <2300mg/day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smoked fish
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hot dogs, luncheon meats, or deli meats need to be heated until steaming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raw or not fully cooked meat, sausage, fish, eggs (i.e. cookie dough or some salad dressings)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added sugar <5-10% of calories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raw or unpasteurized milk, cheese, or other dairy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Herbal teas, remedies, or supplements. Talk with your provider prior to consuming these items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dietary supplements other than those prescribed by your provider

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First Trimester

Physical Changes

- Due to an increase in estrogen and progesterone, the mammary glands enlarge causing increased tenderness and swelling in the chest. You may find a bra without underwire that still provides support is more comfortable.
- Your areolas will enlarge and darken. They may become covered with small, white bumps called Montgomery's Tubercles.
- The veins around your breast may become more noticeable.
- Increase in urination, up to every 2 hours, is common with the uterus growing and increasing pressure on your bladder.
- Mood swings and irritability may be more common, like premenstrual syndrome, due to the increase in hormones.
- Morning sickness is most common in the first trimester due to the increased level of hormones. Even though it usually occurs in the morning, it can happen throughout the day.
- As the uterus grows, it presses on the rectum and intestines and can lead to constipation.
- The digestive tract will slow down due to high levels of progesterone. This can result in heartburn, indigestion, constipation, or gas.
- An increase in blood flow to the uterus is needed, so cardiac volume and output increases by 40-50% throughout pregnancy. This also may increase your heartrate.
- Due to the demands of pregnancy, you may experience increased tiredness.
- Clothes may feel tighter as the fetus grows.
- After as early as 6 weeks of pregnancy relaxing begins to affect the body by loosening joints and ligaments. It can increase injury risk so practice caution with stretching and mobility exercises for the remainder of your pregnancy and postpartum while nursing.

First Trimester Warm Up & Cool Down

Warm Up Movements		Cool Down Movements	
Cardio	5 minutes	Walking	5 minutes
Single Leg Balance	30 seconds each leg	Quad Pull	5 each leg
3 second Box Breathing (3 in, 3 hold, 3 out)	10 reps	Straight Leg March	5 each leg
Plank	30 seconds	Lunge w/ Overhead Reach	5 each leg
Glute Bridge	15 reps	Hamstring Scoop	5 each leg
Lunge in Place	5 each leg	Lateral Lunge	5 each leg
World's Greatest Stretch	5 reps	Hip Cradle (if possible)	5 each leg
Push Up	10 reps	Child Pose	30 seconds

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First Trimester

How to Read the Workout Program

Movements: Here you will find the exercises that you will be performing for your workout.

- *Example: Squat, Hinge, Horizontal Push*

Weeks: Here you will find your sets and reps/time for each exercise during the scheduled weeks.

- *Example: Week 1 & 2 you will be performing 3x30 seconds; 3 sets (also known as rounds) of 30 seconds of each exercise.*

Sets x Reps: This is how many sets (rounds) you will be performing for each exercise within the block. The second number is how many reps or how long you perform each set. In this example, the movements are separated into blocks.

- *Example: 3 x 30 seconds means each set you will do the exercise for 30 seconds, move to the next exercise for 30 seconds, etc. until you complete all exercises in the block for 30 seconds each. You will complete 3 sets before moving to the next block.*

Blocks: Each color represents a new block. Complete 1 set of each exercise in the block before moving on to set 2 of the same exercises in the block.

- *Example for the picture below: You will complete 1 round of a Squat, Overhead Push/Pull, and Carry exercises for 30 seconds each. Then you will go back to the top and repeat that for 2 more rounds. After completing all 3 rounds, you will move on to the blue block where you will go through the same process with a Horizontal Push Variation and Horizontal/Vertical Pull Variation exercises. After completing all 3 rounds you will then move to the last block of Hinge and Plank exercises.*

Movements	Weeks 1 - 2	Weeks 3 - 4	Week 5 - 6
Squat Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Overhead Push/Pull Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Carry Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Horizontal Push Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Horizontal/Vertical Pull Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Hinge Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Plank Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Birth Squat	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 1 - 6: Run, Row, Bike (60 seconds on / 120 seconds off) for 15 minutes			

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First Trimester

How to Read the Workout Program

- **Movements Variations:** Pick a movement that allows for quality movement throughout the whole movement pattern. This will require progression/regression throughout pregnancy and postpartum based on how you feel that day.
- **Squat:** Air Squat, Front Squat, Goblet Squat, Box Squat, Back Squat, One-legged Box Squat, Split Squat, Lunges, Tempo Squats, Sumo Stance Box Squat, etc.
- **Overhead Push/Pull:** Pull Ups, Lat Pull Down, Overhead Press, Banded Pulls, etc.
- **Carry:** Farmer's Carry, Suitcase Carry, Waiter's Carry, Overhead Carry, etc.
- **Horizontal Push:** Bench Press (barbells, DBs, single-arm), Push Ups (Elevated, Ring, Wall), Floor Press, Banded Press, etc.
- **Horizontal/ Vertical Pull:** Inverted Row, Bent Over Row, Med Ball Slam, Ring Row, etc.
- **Hinge:** Banded Hip Hinge, Good Morning, Box Step-Ups, KB Swing (Single, Double, Alternating), Romanian Deadlift, Trap bar Deadlift. Glute Bridge, etc.

Movements	Weeks 1 - 2	Weeks 3 - 4	Week 5 - 6
Squat Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Overhead Push/Pull Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Carry Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Horizontal Push Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Horizontal/Vertical Pull Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Hinge Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Plank Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Birth Squat	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 1 - 6: Run, Row, Bike (60 seconds on / 120 seconds off) for 15 minutes			

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First Trimester

Exercise Program Week 1 – 6

FIRST TRIMESTER WORKOUT 1

Movements	Weeks 1 - 2	Weeks 3 - 4	Week 5 - 6
Squat Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Overhead Push/Pull Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Carry Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Horizontal Push Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Horizontal/Vertical Pull Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Hinge Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Plank Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Birth Squat	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 1 - 6: Run, Row, Bike (60 seconds on / 120 seconds off) for 15 minutes			

FIRST TRIMESTER WORKOUT 2

Movements	Weeks 1 - 2	Weeks 3 - 4	Week 5 - 6
Hinge Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Overhead Push/Pull Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Carry Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Horizontal Push Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Horizontal/Vertical Pull Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Squat Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Plank Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Birth Squat	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 1 - 6: Jog 30 minutes			

FIRST TRIMESTER WORKOUT 3

Movements	Weeks 1 - 2	Weeks 3 - 4	Week 5 - 6
Squat Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Overhead Push/Pull Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Carry Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Horizontal Push Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Horizontal/Vertical Pull Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Hinge Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Plank Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Birth Squat	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 1 - 6: Jog 30 minutes			

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First Trimester

Exercise Program Week 7 – 12

FIRST TRIMESTER WORKOUT 1

Movements	Weeks 7 - 8	Weeks 9 - 10	Week 11 - 12
Hinge Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Overhead Push/Pull Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Carry Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Horizontal Push Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Horizontal/Vertical Pull Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Squat Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Plank Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Birth Squat	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 1 - 6: Jog 30 minutes			

FIRST TRIMESTER WORKOUT 2

Movements	Weeks 7 - 8	Weeks 9 - 10	Week 11 - 12
Squat Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Overhead Push/Pull Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Carry Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Horizontal Push Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Horizontal/Vertical Pull Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Hinge Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Plank Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Birth Squat	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 1 - 6: Jog 3 minutes on / 2 minutes off x 8			

FIRST TRIMESTER WORKOUT 3

Movements	Weeks 7 - 8	Weeks 9 - 10	Week 11 - 12
Squat Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Overhead Push/Pull Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Carry Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Horizontal Push Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Horizontal/Vertical Pull Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Hinge Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Plank Variation	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Birth Squat	3 x 30 seconds	4 x 30 seconds	5 x 30 seconds
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 1 - 6: Jog 15 minutes			

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Second Trimester

Sleep Changes

Sleep tends to improve during the second trimester as energy improves and nausea subsides. If you are having trouble sleeping, you can reach out to your medical provider. You may find pregnancy pillows or additional support around your growing body provides a more comfortable and rejuvenating sleep.

Cognitive Changes

Cognitive changes like trouble remembering things typically stabilize throughout the second trimester. If you found a best-practice during your first trimester, there's nothing wrong with keeping up helpful habits. You may choose to remain consistent, because your third trimester can trigger new changes and it's generally easier to maintain rather than restart a habit; many women report temporary differences in memory, concentration, and focus similar to their first few months of pregnancy.

Nutritional Changes

In addition to the first trimester's guidelines:

- Add an additional 340 calories per day. This is only a small snack, and it should be balanced with protein, fat, and carbohydrate. Greek yogurt, peanut butter toast, cheese stick and berries, vegetables and bean dip, or fruit and peanut butter are some examples.
- It is perfectly normal for your taste preferences to change during pregnancy. Find foods that you like and can tolerate.
- For reflux or 'heart burn' consider:
 - Eating small frequent meals
 - Sitting up or walking following meals, avoid lying down for 3 hours
 - Rise the head of your bed 6-9 inches
 - Wear loose fitting clothing
- For constipation consider:
 - Drinking plenty of water approximately 96oz/day
 - Eat more fiber with a goal of 25-35 grams per day. This can be done by consuming a minimum of 5 servings of fruits and vegetables, and eating more 100% whole grains, beans, nuts, and seeds
 - Choose products with at least 4 grams dietary fiber per serving

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Second Trimester

Physical Changes

- During the second trimester hormones begin to level out. This can result in a decrease in morning sickness, tiredness, and breast tenderness.
- Your appetite may increase.
- Fetus movement may be felt around 20 weeks.
- By 20 weeks the top of the uterus has reached the level of the belly button, and the pregnant uterus is more visible therefore avoid prone position exercises.
- Discomfort, stretching, and sometimes pain in the side and lower stomach will start occurring as the ligaments make room for the fetus. It is not uncommon for the belly to become itchy.
- Frequent urination may decrease due to the uterus growing out of the pelvic cavity.
- You may experience congestion, nosebleeds, and gums can bleed more easily due to hormone changes affecting blood flow/mucous membranes.
- Varicose veins and hemorrhoids may appear. If you experience hemorrhoids, please consult your medical provider on ways to reduce constipation and treat hemorrhoids.
- White vaginal discharge is normal. Please consult your medical provider if discharge is colored or bloody as this is a sign of possible complications.
- Backaches are common due to stretching of the muscles, ligaments, and weight gain occurring in your body.
- Skin pigmentation may change on the face or abdomen due to hormones.
- Heart burn and indigestion may continue

Second Trimester Warm Up & Cool Down

Warm Up Movements		Cool Down Movements (Repeat 2x)	
Foam Roll (Needed areas)	5 minutes	Pelvic Tilts	10 reps
Lateral Band Walks	10 yards each leg	Door Frame Lat Stretch	30 seconds each arm
In Place Band March	10 steps each leg	Door Frame Chest Stretch	30 seconds each arm
Split Squat	10 each leg	Kneeling Hip Flexor (stand if more comfortable)	30 seconds each leg
Lateral Split Squat	10 each leg		
Curtsy Squat	10 each leg		
Band Pull Apart	10 reps		
Wall Slide	10 reps		

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Second Trimester

Exercise Program Week 1 – 6

SECOND TRIMESTER WORKOUT 1

Movements	Weeks 1 - 2	Weeks 3 - 4	Week 5 - 6
Squat Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Overhead Push/Pull Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Carry Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Horizontal Push Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Horizontal/Vertical Pull Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Hinge Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Plank Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Birth Squat	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 1 – 6: Continuous Step Ups 4 minute on / 1 minute off x 5			

SECOND TRIMESTER WORKOUT 2

Movements	Weeks 1 - 2	Weeks 3 - 4	Week 5 - 6
Hinge Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Overhead Push/Pull Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Carry Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Horizontal Push Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Horizontal/Vertical Pull Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Squat Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Plank Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Birth Squat	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 1 - 6: Jog/Walk 20 minutes			

SECOND TRIMESTER WORKOUT 3

Movements	Weeks 1 - 2	Weeks 3 - 4	Week 5 - 6
Squat Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Overhead Push/Pull Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Carry Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Horizontal Push Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Horizontal/Vertical Pull Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Hinge Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Plank Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Birth Squat	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 1 - 6: Jog/Walk 20 minutes			

Pregnancy & Postpartum Performance Training Guide

Second Trimester

Exercise Program Week 7 - 12

SECOND TRIMESTER WORKOUT 1

Movements	Weeks 7 - 8	Weeks 9 - 10	Week 11 - 12
Hinge Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Overhead Push/Pull Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Carry Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Horizontal Push Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Horizontal/Vertical Pull Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Squat Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Plank Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Birth Squat	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 1 – 6: Continuous Step Ups 4 minute on / 1 minute off x 5			

SECOND TRIMESTER WORKOUT 2

Movements	Weeks 7 - 8	Weeks 9 - 10	Week 11 - 12
Squat Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Overhead Push/Pull Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Carry Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Horizontal Push Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Horizontal/Vertical Pull Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Hinge Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Plank Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Birth Squat	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 1 - 6: Jog/Walk 20 minutes			

SECOND TRIMESTER WORKOUT 3

Movements	Weeks 7 - 8	Weeks 9 - 10	Week 11 - 12
Squat Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Overhead Push/Pull Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Carry Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Horizontal Push Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Horizontal/Vertical Pull Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Hinge Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Plank Variation	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Birth Squat	3 x 45 seconds	4 x 45 seconds	3 x 45 seconds
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 1 - 6: Jog/Walk 20 minutes			

Pregnancy & Postpartum Performance Training Guide

Third Trimester

Sleep Changes

Your hormones will continue to change toward the end of pregnancy and some tissue will swell in response. That swelling can even extend to the tissue inside your nose, meaning it's not unusual to snore in your third trimester as your nasal airways change temporarily. You might find it helpful to shift your sleeping position or elevate your head with a pillow. Nighttime awakenings happen more frequently in your third trimester as well. If you are having trouble sleeping or snoring becomes louder and more frequent, you can reach out to your medical provider.

Cognitive Changes

Memory, concentration, and focus can decrease during the third trimester.

Use to-do lists and writing things down to help you remember important tasks, information, and events. If you did have a cognitive performance habit that was helpful during your first trimester, now might be the time to reinvigorate it!

Nutritional Changes

In addition to the previous trimester's guidelines:

- Aim for an additional 450 calories above your baseline per day.
- Continue with balanced snack(s) with fat, carbohydrate, and protein.
- You may find it harder to eat full meals towards the end of the third trimester. Breaking them into smaller more frequent meals, can be helpful.



Pregnancy & Postpartum Performance Training Guide

Third Trimester

Physical Changes

- An increase in body temperature occurs because the fetus radiates heat.
- Increased urination returns due to added pressure on the bladder.
- The fetus presses on the vein responsible for returning blood to the heart, resulting in a decreased blood pressure.
- Swelling in the ankles, hands, and face is common because of fluid retention. At your next appointment please notify your OBGYN or CNM of any swelling.
- Hair growth is common due to increases in hormones. Hair texture can also change.
- Leg cramps are common.
- Braxton-Hicks contractions may begin to happen at irregular intervals in preparation for childbirth.
- Stretch marks can begin to appear.
- Colostrum may begin to leak from your nipples in preparation for breast feeding.
- Itchy or dry skin may persist around the stomach.
- Libido may decrease.
- Skin pigmentation, including dark patches of skin on the face may become more apparent.
- Constipation, heartburn, and indigestion may continue. Ask your medical provider for help with these concerns.
- White vaginal discharge will increase.
- Backaches can increase in intensity.
- Varicose veins and hemorrhoids may increase in severity.

Information Retrieved from:

- <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/the-third-trimester>
- <https://www.acog.org/womens-health/pregnancy/labor-and-delivery>

Third Trimester Warm Up & Cool Down

Warm Up Movements		Cool Down Movements (Repeat 2x)
Off Feet Cardio	5 minutes	Wide Child's Pose w/ Side Stretch (wide knees, sit back as far as you can, reach side to side for 5 breaths rotating for 2 – 3 minutes)
Lateral Band Walks	10 yards each leg	
In Place Band March	10 steps each leg	
Supported Split Squat	10 each leg	
Supported Squat	10 reps	Deep Breathing & Relaxation (Focus on calmly executing deep breathing and progressive muscle relaxation for 2 – 3 minutes)
Band Pull Apart	10 reps	
Wall Slide	10 reps	

Pregnancy & Postpartum Performance Training Guide

Third Trimester

Exercise Program Week 1 – 6

THIRD TRIMESTER WORKOUT 1

Movements	Weeks 1 - 2	Weeks 3 - 4	Week 5 - 6
Squat Variation	4 x 8	4 x 10	3 x 5
Incline Push Up	3 x 10	3 x 10	2 x 8
Band Pull Apart	3 x 12	3 x 12	2 x 10
Seated DB Overhead Press	2 x 10	2 x 10	2 x 5
Hip Thrust	2 x 15	2 x 15	2 x 8
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 1 – 6: Cycling 15 minutes			

THIRD TRIMESTER WORKOUT 2

Movements	Weeks 1 - 2	Weeks 3 - 4	Week 5 - 6
Step Ups	4 x 8 each side	4 x 10 each side	3 x 5 each side
1 Arm DB Row	3 x 10 each side	3 x 10 each side	2 x 8 each side
KB Deadlift	3 x 12	3 x 12	2 x 10
Side Lying Leg Lift	2 x 10	2 x 10	2 x 5
DB Curl to Press	2 x 15	2 x 15	2 x 8
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 1 - 6: Continuous Step Ups 15 minutes			

THIRD TRIMESTER WORKOUT 3

Movements	Weeks 1 - 2	Weeks 3 - 4	Week 5 - 6
Supported Split Squat	4 x 8 each side	4 x 10 each side	3 x 5 each side
Incline DB Press	3 x 10	3 x 10	2 x 8
Seated Band Pulldown	3 x 12	3 x 12	2 x 10
Lateral Raises	2 x 10	2 x 10	2 x 5
Band Monster Walk	2 x 15 each side	2 x 15 each side	2 x 8 each side
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 1 - 6: Sled Drag 15 minutes			

Pregnancy & Postpartum Performance Training Guide

Third Trimester

Exercise Program Week 7 - 12

THIRD TRIMESTER WORKOUT 1

Movements	Weeks 7 - 8	Weeks 9 - 10	Week 11 - 12
Squat Variation	4 x 8	4 x 10	3 x 5
Incline Push Up	3 x 10	3 x 10	2 x 8
Band Pull Apart	3 x 12	3 x 12	2 x 10
Seated DB Overhead Press	2 x 10	2 x 10	2 x 5
Hip Thrust	2 x 15	2 x 15	2 x 8
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 1 - 6: Cycling 15 minutes			

THIRD TRIMESTER WORKOUT 2

Movements	Weeks 7 - 8	Weeks 9 - 10	Week 11 - 12
Step Ups	4 x 8 each side	4 x 10 each side	3 x 5 each side
1 Arm DB Row	3 x 10 each side	3 x 10 each side	2 x 8 each side
KB Deadlift	3 x 12	3 x 12	2 x 10
Side Lying Leg Lift	2 x 10	2 x 10	2 x 5
DB Curl to Press	2 x 15	2 x 15	2 x 8
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 1 - 6: Continuous Step Ups 15 minutes			

THIRD TRIMESTER WORKOUT 3

Movements	Weeks 7 - 8	Weeks 9 - 10	Week 11 - 12
Supported Split Squat	4 x 8 each side	4 x 10 each side	3 x 5 each side
Incline DB Press	3 x 10	3 x 10	2 x 8
Seated Band Pulldown	3 x 12	3 x 12	2 x 10
Lateral Raises	2 x 10	2 x 10	2 x 5
Band Monster Walk	2 x 15 each side	2 x 15 each side	2 x 8 each side
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 1 - 6: Sled Drag 15 minutes			

Pregnancy & Postpartum Performance Training Guide

Third Trimester

Labor and Birth

Below is a link regarding information for labor and birth. This link discusses signs of labor, false labor, stages of labor, managing labor pain, inducing labor, and Cesarean birth. There are multiple options for positioning during labor and delivery. For more information on options for positioning during labor and pushing, please consult your OBGYN, CNM, or doula.

For more information check out : <https://www.womenshealth.gov/pregnancy/childbirth-and-beyond/labor-and-birth>

Cozean Pelvic Dysfunction Screening Tool

Instructions: Please check all that apply

- I sometimes have pelvic pain (in genitals, perineum, pubic or bladder area, or pain with urination) that exceeds a '3' on a 1-10 pain scale, with 10 being the worst pain imaginable.
- I can remember falling onto my tailbone, lower back, or buttocks (even in childhood).
- I sometimes experience one or more of the following urinary symptoms:
 - Accidental loss of urine.
 - Feeling unable to completely empty my bladder.
 - Having to void within a few minutes of a previous void.
 - Pain or burning with urination.
 - Difficulty starting or frequent stopping/starting of urine stream.
- I often or occasionally must get up to urinate two or more times at night.
- I sometimes have a feeling of increased pelvic pressure or the sensation of my pelvic organs slipping down or falling out.
- I have a history of pain in my low back, hip, groin, or tailbone or have had sciatica.
- I sometimes experience one or more of the following bowel symptoms:
 - Loss of bowel control.
 - Feeling unable to completely empty my bowels.
 - Straining or pain with a bowel movement.
 - Difficulty initiating a bowel movement.
- I sometimes experience pain or discomfort with sexual activity or intercourse.
- Sexual activity increases one or more of my other symptoms.
- Prolonged sitting increases my symptoms.

If you have checked 3 or more boxes, it is recommended to schedule an appointment with a pelvic health occupational therapist or pelvic health physical therapist (PHOT or PHPT).

Source: https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/d1026c_42a0fda8e5644930950d754619586614.pdf

Pregnancy & Postpartum Performance Training Guide

Postpartum

Postpartum Recovery Timeline

Below is a list of typical recovery timelines postpartum. Please consult your medical provider with questions about your own personal postpartum recovery timeline.

- **Uterus:** 6-8 weeks
- **Pelvic floor:** minimum 6 months
- **Diastasis Recti:** 8 weeks-12+ months
- **Joints:** 3+ months
- **Balance:** 6-12 weeks
- **Breathing:** 2-3 days
- **Cardiovascular:** 6-12 weeks
- **Posture:** 6+ weeks
- **C-section:** 6-12+ weeks

NOTE: Following birth, you will have vaginal discharge called lochia that consists of blood, mucus, uterine tissue, and other materials from your uterus. There are three stages of lochia bleeding that will start heavy for the first few days and taper off over several weeks. Lochia may increase during or after physical activity like walking or climbing stairs. Although exercise is important post-partum, too much too quickly can prevent you from healing. If you notice heavier bleeding or a change in color after exercise, it's usually a sign to slow down and rest more. Pay attention to how your body feels and adjust your activity level accordingly, especially in the first 6 weeks post-partum.

Source:

<https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/symptoms/22485-lochia>

Lochia has three stages

The duration of each stage and the way lochia looks can vary.

Lochia rubra		Lochia rubra is the first stage of lochia. You can expect: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dark or bright red blood.• Lasts for three to four days.• Flows like a heavy period.• Small clots are normal.• Mild, period-like cramping.
Lochia serosa		Lochia serosa is the second stage of lochia. You can expect: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pinkish brown discharge that's less bloody and more watery.• Lasts for four to 12 days.• Flow is moderate.• Less clotting or no clots.
Lochia alba		Lochia alba is the last stage of lochia. You can expect: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yellowish white discharge.• Little to no blood.• Light flow or spotting.• Lasts from about 12 days to six weeks.• No clots.

 Cleveland Clinic

Pregnancy & Postpartum Performance Training Guide

Postpartum

Breath, Core, and Pelvic Floor Connection

The core and pelvic floor go through a lot of changes during pregnancy and postpartum. We can use our breath to help us stay connected and engage the core and pelvic floor while healing and working out.

Our core muscles are more than just your “6 pack”. They are a group of muscles that wrap around your trunk into your spine from the base of your pelvis to your diaphragm. Your pelvic floor is a group of muscles that sit at the base of your pelvis and provide support, stability, posture, sexual gratification, and assist with continence of bowel and bladder.



Below is a way to coordinate your breath, core, and pelvic floor:

1. Inhale and let your rib cage expand 360 degrees (in all directions), as you relax your core and pelvic floor. You should feel your pelvic floor gently move downward as you relax. Do not force or strain to achieve this movement.
2. Exhale while thinking of gently zipping up the middle of your core starting from your pubic bone, moving up to your rib cage. You should also feel your pelvic floor gently lift. This should be no more than 2-3/10 effort.
3. Repeat the above 4x taking approximately 3-4 seconds to inhale and 4-6 seconds to exhale.

This breath, core and pelvic floor coordination and awareness practice is built in throughout this 0–18-week guide to help you connect with and coordinate your core and pelvic floor in different positions that you may find yourself in throughout the day. As you start this practice you will notice different positions are easier than others. Laying on your back may work best for you, standing while gently tapping your back to provide tactile feedback for your brain to breathe into that area, sitting with your hands wrapped around your waist, or in child’s pose may work for someone else. Start in a position that allows you to connect and coordinate your breath the most. This is a gentle practice and takes time and practice but is fundamental for all other movements.

Pregnancy & Postpartum Performance Training Guide

Postpartum

Exercise Program Considerations

*Drink plenty of water

*Complete the Fitness Readiness Survey prior to beginning your workout and adjust your workout intensity based on your score. This is extremely important to avoid injuries, allow optimal healing, and regain strength and endurance as your body is ready. The goal is to heal from birth and a safe return to fitness through quality movements.

*It is recommended to have rest days in between workouts, but YOU choose which days of the week work best for you and your workouts. On rest days you can go for a walk, but your body's recovery should be the focus during this time.

*ALL exercises are designed to be performed bodyweight under the assumption many of you will not have access or time to go to the gym. As you progress, if any exercise becomes too easy, slow down the tempo for each rep OR if you have access to weights or items that can be used as weights, you may add when appropriate. Remember to gradually workup in weight and avoid starting at pre-pregnancy level due to risk for injury.

***If you miss a workout or two here and there, continue where you left off. However, if you miss a week or two, repeat the last week you completed to minimize the risk of injury.**

*If you are cleared and ready to progress exercises beyond bodyweight, you may add weights. If you do not have weights, find something around the house to utilize as a weight (car seat, diaper bag, baby, books, etc.).

*If you need assistance on how to safely progress exercises, reach out to your local OST strength and conditioning coach or medical provider who can assist or direct you to the appropriate resources for assistance.



Pregnancy & Postpartum Performance Training Guide

0-18 Week Postpartum Home Exercise Guide

Postpartum Program Overview

To optimize the health of the woman and infants, postpartum care should be ongoing and catered to the woman's individual needs. Follow up care with the medical provider should happen within 3 weeks postpartum and continued care as needed until 12 weeks after birth.

WEEKS	EMPHASIS	SESSION FOCUS
0-2 Weeks	Rest/Breathwork	Rest/recovery. Gentle pelvic floor contraction/relaxation with breathwork(2 days/week up to every day)
3-4 Weeks	Rest/Breathwork/Walk	Rest/recovery. Breathwork to connect and co-regulate with pelvic floor contraction/relaxation. Begin walking around the home.
5-6 Weeks	Movement Patterns	Total body mobility, bodyweight movement patterns, pelvic and core control (start 2x/week, then 3x/week)
7-8 Weeks	Integration into strength/hip stability	Total body strength exercises with a focus on single leg hip stability, pelvic and core control
9-12 Weeks	Slow integration into low level plyometrics	Building on last 2 weeks, adding in lower level plyometrics to prepare for running with R2R screen
13-18 Weeks	Slow integration into running	Continuing with strength and building up cardio. Slowly introducing running as R2R screen allows.

*Please consult and be cleared by your medical provider before starting or continuing this exercise program if any adverse reactions or setbacks occur.

Post Partum Warm Up & Cool Down

Warm Up Movements		Cool Down Movements	
Cardio	5 minutes	Walking	5 minutes
Single Leg Balance	30 seconds each leg	Quad Pull	5 each leg
3 second Box Breathing (3 in, 3 hold, 3 out)	10 reps	Straight Leg March	5 each leg
Plank	30 seconds	Lunge w/ Overhead Reach	5 each leg
Glute Bridge	15 reps	Hamstring Scoop	5 each leg
Lunge in Place	5 each leg	Lateral Lunge	5 each leg
World's Greatest Stretch	5 reps	Hip Cradle (if possible)	5 each leg
Push Up	10 reps	Child Pose	30 seconds

NOTE: The below postpartum warm up and cool down will start no earlier than the first 6-weeks of your exercise program.

Pregnancy & Postpartum Performance Training Guide

Postpartum

Postpartum Fitness Readiness Survey

Daily Readiness Assessment

Sleep

1 Awful	2 Poor	3 Ok	4 Good	5 Excellent
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Mood

1 Very Poor	2 A Little	3 Ok	4 Good	5 Great
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Energy

1 Wiped	2 Tired	3 Ok	4 Good	5 Amped
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Stress

1 Buried	2 Strained	3 Ok	4 Not Much	5 Relaxed
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Soreness

1 Very Sore	2 Pretty Sore	3 Moderate	4 Just a Little	5 None At All
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Score Results:

20 – 25: Complete full workout

15 – 19: Lower weights and complete full workout

10 – 14: Complete only cardio workout or only lifting workout

0 – 9: Take a rest day. Go for a short walk but focus on yourself and what you need to feel better

Pregnancy & Postpartum Performance Training Guide

Postpartum

Exercise Program Weeks 1-6

POST PARTUM : STANDARD DELIVERY WORKOUT 1

Movements	Weeks 1 - 2	Weeks 3 - 4	Week 5 - 6
Box Breathing	1 x 1 min	2 x 1 min	3 x 1 min
Cat Cow	1 x 8	2 x 8	3 x 8
Single Leg QL Stretch	1 x 30 seconds	2 x 30 seconds	3 x 30 seconds
Walking	1 x 5 min	2 x 5 min	3 x 4 min
Pelvic Tilts	1 x 10	2 x 8	3x 8
Glute Bridge	1 x 10	2 x 8	3 x 8
Heel Slides	1 x 10	2 x 8	3 x 8
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 1 & 2: Walking 5 minutes			
Weeks 3 & 4: Walking 10 minutes			
Weeks 5 & 6: Walking 12 minutes			

POST PARTUM : STANDARD DELIVERY WORKOUT 2

Movements	Weeks 1 - 2	Weeks 3 - 4	Week 5 - 6
Box Breathing	1 x 1 min	2 x 1 min	3 x 1 min
Cat Cow	1 x 8	2 x 8	3 x 8
Single Leg QL Stretch	1 x 30 seconds	2 x 30 seconds	3 x 30 seconds
Walking	1 x 5 min	2 x 5 min	3 x 4 min
Pelvic Tilts	1 x 10	2 x 8	3x 8
Glute Bridge	1 x 10	2 x 8	3 x 8
Heel Slides	1 x 10	2 x 8	3 x 8
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 1 & 2: Walking 5 minutes			
Weeks 3 & 4: Walking 10 minutes			
Weeks 5 & 6: Walking 12 minutes			

Pregnancy & Postpartum Performance Training Guide

Postpartum

Exercise Program Weeks 7-12

POST PARTUM : STANDARD DELIVERY WORKOUT 1

Movements	Weeks 7 - 8	Weeks 9 - 10	Week 11 - 12
Cat Cow	2 x 10	3 x 10	3 x 12
High Knee March in Place	2 x 10 steps each side	3 x 10 steps each side	3 x 15 steps each side
Arm Circles	2 x 12	3 x 10	3 x 12
Bodyweight Squat	2 x 10	3 x 10	3 x 12
Incline Push Ups	2 x 10	3 x 10	3 x 12
Seated Band Row	2 x 10	3 x 12	3 x 15
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 7 & 8: Walking 10 minutes			
Weeks 9 & 10: Walking 15 minutes			
Weeks 11 & 12: Walking 20 minutes			

POST PARTUM : STANDARD DELIVERY WORKOUT 2

Movements	Weeks 7 - 8	Weeks 9 - 10	Week 11 - 12
Pelvic Tilts	2 x 8	2 x 10	3 x 10
Side Lying QL Stretch	2 x 30 seconds	2 x 30 seconds	3 x 30 seconds
Split Stance Open Book	2 x 10 each side	2 x 10 each side	3 x 10 each side
Step Ups	2 x 8 each side	2 x 12 each side	3 x 10 each side
Bodyweight Good Mornings	2 x 8	2 x 12	3 x 10
Side Lying Clamshells	2 x 8 each side	2 x 12 each side	3 x 10 each side
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 7 & 8: Walking 10 minutes			
Weeks 9 & 10: Walking 12 minutes			
Weeks 11 & 12: Walking 15 minutes			

POST PARTUM : STANDARD DELIVERY WORKOUT 3

Movements	Weeks 7 - 8	Weeks 9 - 10	Week 11 - 12
High Knee March in Place	2 x 30 seconds	2 x 30 seconds	3 x 30 seconds
Quadruped Hip Circles	2 x 10 each side	3 x 10 each side	3 x 10 each side
Deadbug Hold	2 x 5 breaths	2 x 5 breaths	3 x 5 breaths
Split Squat	2 x 8 each side	2 x 10 each side	2 x 12 each side
DB Overhead Press	2 x 8	2 x 10	2 x 12
Glute Bridge w/ 3 second hold each rep	2 x 8	2 x 10	2 x 12
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 7 & 8: Cardio Machine of Choice 10 minutes			
Weeks 9 & 10: Cardio Machine of Choice 10 minutes			
Weeks 11 & 12: Cardio Machine of Choice 15 minutes			

Pregnancy & Postpartum Performance Training Guide

Postpartum

Exercise Program Weeks 13-18

POST PARTUM : STANDARD DELIVERY WORKOUT 1

Movements	Weeks 13 - 15	Weeks 16 - 18
Quadruped Hip Circles	2 x 10	2 x 10
High Knee March	2 x 20 yd	2 x 20 yd
Side Lying Open Books	2 x 10	2 x 10
Front Squat Variation	4 x 5	4 x 5
Push Ups	2 x 10	2 x 10
1 Arm DB Row	2 x 12 each side	2 x 12 each side
Aerobic Conditioning		
Weeks 15 - 18: Incline Treadmill Walk 15 min		

POST PARTUM : STANDARD DELIVERY WORKOUT 2

Movements	Weeks 13 - 15	Weeks 16 - 18
Goblet High Knee March	2 x 40 steps	2 x 40 steps
Standing Hurdle Walk Over	2 x 10 each side	2 x 10 each side
Dead Hang from Pull Up Bar	2 x 15 seconds	2 x 15 seconds
DB Split Squat	4 x 6 each side	4 x 6 each side
Seated DB Overhead Press	3 x 8	3 x 8
Glute Bridge * Single Leg if able *	3 x 10	3 x 10
Aerobic Conditioning		
Weeks 15 - 18: Incline Treadmill Walk 15 min		

POST PARTUM : STANDARD DELIVERY WORKOUT 3

Movements	Weeks 13 - 15	Weeks 16 - 18
Pelvic Tilts	2 x 10	2 x 10
Bird Dog	2 x 8 each side	2 x 8 each side
Backwards Sled Drag	2 x 20 yd	2 x 20 yd
Goblet Step Ups	4 x 5 each side	4 x 5 each side
Tall Plank	2 x 5 breaths	2 x 5 breaths
DB RDL	2 x 12	2 x 12
Aerobic Conditioning		
Weeks 15 - 18: Cycling 15 min		

Pregnancy & Postpartum Performance Training Guide

Postpartum

Exercise Program Weeks 1-8

POST PARTUM : C – SECTION DELIVERY WORKOUT 1

Movements	Weeks 1 - 2	Weeks 3 - 4	Week 5 - 8
Box Breathing	1 x 1 min	2 x 1 min	3 x 1 min
Cat Cow	1 x 8	2 x 8	3 x 8
Single Leg QL Stretch	1 x 30 seconds	2 x 30 seconds	3 x 30 seconds
Walking	1 x 5 min	2 x 5 min	3 x 4 min
Pelvic Tilts	1 x 10	2 x 8	3x 8
Glute Bridge	1 x 10	2 x 8	3 x 8
Heel Slides	1 x 10	2 x 8	3 x 8
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 1 & 2: Walking 5 minutes			
Weeks 3 & 4: Walking 10 minutes			
Weeks 5 - 8: Walking 12 minutes			

POST PARTUM : C – SECTION DELIVERY WORKOUT 2

Movements	Weeks 1 - 2	Weeks 3 - 4	Week 5 - 8
Box Breathing	1 x 1 min	2 x 1 min	3 x 1 min
Cat Cow	1 x 8	2 x 8	3 x 8
Single Leg QL Stretch	1 x 30 seconds	2 x 30 seconds	3 x 30 seconds
Walking	1 x 5 min	2 x 5 min	3 x 4 min
Pelvic Tilts	1 x 10	2 x 8	3x 8
Glute Bridge	1 x 10	2 x 8	3 x 8
Heel Slides	1 x 10	2 x 8	3 x 8
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 1 & 2: Walking 5 minutes			
Weeks 3 & 4: Walking 10 minutes			
Weeks 5 - 8: Walking 12 minutes			

Pregnancy & Postpartum Performance Training Guide

Postpartum

Exercise Program Weeks 9-14

POST PARTUM : C – SECTION DELIVERY WORKOUT 1

Movements	Weeks 9 - 10	Weeks 11 - 12	Week 13 - 14
Cat Cow	2 x 10	3 x 10	3 x 12
High Knee March in Place	2 x 10 steps each side	3 x 10 steps each side	3 x 15 steps each side
Arm Circles	2 x 12	3 x 10	3 x 12
Bodyweight Squat	2 x 10	3 x 10	3 x 12
Incline Push Ups	2 x 10	3 x 10	3 x 12
Seated Band Row	2 x 10	3 x 12	3 x 15
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 9 & 10: Walking 10 minutes			
Weeks 11 & 12: Walking 15 minutes			
Weeks 13 & 14: Walking 20 minutes			

POST PARTUM : C – SECTION DELIVERY WORKOUT 2

Movements	Weeks 9 - 10	Weeks 11 - 12	Week 13 - 14
Pelvic Tilts	2 x 8	2 x 10	3 x 10
Side Lying QL Stretch	2 x 30 seconds	2 x 30 seconds	3 x 30 seconds
Split Stance Open Book	2 x 10 each side	2 x 10 each side	3 x 10 each side
Step Ups	2 x 8 each side	2 x 12 each side	3 x 10 each side
KB/DB Deadlift	2 x 8	2 x 12	3 x 10
Side Lying Clamshells	2 x 8 each side	2 x 12 each side	3 x 10 each side
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 9 & 10: Walking 10 minutes			
Weeks 11 & 12: Walking 12 minutes			
Weeks 13 & 14: Walking 15 minutes			

POST PARTUM : C – SECTION DELIVERY WORKOUT 3

Movements	Weeks 9 - 10	Weeks 11 - 12	Week 13 - 14
High Knee March in Place	2 x 30 seconds	2 x 30 seconds	3 x 30 seconds
Quadruped Hip Circles	2 x 10 each side	3 x 10 each side	3 x 10 each side
Deadbug Hold	2 x 5 breaths	2 x 5 breaths	3 x 5 breaths
Split Squat	2 x 8 each side	2 x 10 each side	2 x 12 each side
DB Overhead Press	2 x 8	2 x 10	2 x 12
Glute Bridge w/ 3 second hold each rep	2 x 8	2 x 10	2 x 12
Aerobic Conditioning			
Weeks 9 & 10: Cardio Machine of Choice 10 minutes			
Weeks 11 & 12: Cardio Machine of Choice 10 minutes			
Weeks 13 & 14: Cardio Machine of Choice 15 minutes			

Pregnancy & Postpartum Performance Training Guide

Postpartum

Exercise Program Weeks 15-18

POST PARTUM : C – SECTION DELIVERY WORKOUT 1

Movements	Weeks 15 - 16	Weeks 17 - 18
Quadruped Hip Circles	2 x 10	2 x 10
High Knee March	2 x 20 yd	2 x 20 yd
Side Lying Open Books	2 x 10	2 x 10
Front Squat Variation	4 x 5	4 x 5
Push Ups	2 x 10	2 x 10
1 Arm DB Row	2 x 12 each side	2 x 12 each side
Aerobic Conditioning		
Weeks 15 - 18: Incline Treadmill Walk 15 min		

POST PARTUM : C – SECTION DELIVERY WORKOUT 2

Movements	Weeks 15 - 16	Weeks 17 - 18
Pelvic Tilts	2 x 10	2 x 10
Bird Dog	2 x 8 each side	2 x 8 each side
Backwards Sled Drag	2 x 20 yd	2 x 20 yd
Goblet Step Ups	4 x 5 each side	4 x 5 each side
Tall Plank	2 x 5 breaths	2 x 5 breaths
DB RDL	2 x 12	2 x 12
Aerobic Conditioning		
Weeks 15 - 18: Cycling 15 min		

POST PARTUM : C – SECTION DELIVERY WORKOUT 3

Movements	Weeks 15 - 16	Weeks 17 - 18
Goblet High Knee March	2 x 40 steps	2 x 40 steps
Standing Hurdle Walk Over	2 x 10 each side	2 x 10 each side
Dead Hang from Pull Up Bar	2 x 15 seconds	2 x 15 seconds
DB Split Squat	4 x 6 each side	4 x 6 each side
Seated DB Overhead Press	3 x 8	3 x 8
Glute Bridge * Single Leg if able *	3 x 10	3 x 10
Aerobic Conditioning		
Weeks 15 - 18: Incline Treadmill Walk 15 min		

Pregnancy & Postpartum Performance Training Guide

Postpartum

0-2 Weeks Postpartum

Emphasis: Rest & Breathwork

Session Focus: Rest & Recovery

Mental Readiness

- Support the first two weeks postpartum you may feel a wide range of emotions. From joy, excitement, and fulfillment to anxiety, tears, and fatigue. It is essential during this time to rely on your support networks for emotional support

Spiritual Readiness

- Consider Community- “With Whom Do I Spend My Life?”
- What mature parents do you trust to ask questions for advice, and are you willing to receive it?
- Talk to friends who have been through the parenthood transition

Nutritional Readiness

- Nutrition is essential to postpartum recovery and to provide energy if you are breastfeeding. Focus on eating nutrient-rich foods and drinking plenty of water, aiming for 16 cups or 128 oz of water each day.

Sleep Readiness

- You will experience disrupted sleep from frequent wakings from the baby. Be flexible with your sleep routine and ask for help with the baby so that you can rest.

Physical Readiness

- Begin to connect with your breath, core, and pelvic floor. While you are lying in bed, nursing baby, or resting take a deep gentle in-hale while relaxing your core and pelvic floor. Exhale and just be aware of how your core and pelvic floor responds. Ideally you feel gentle support from your core and pelvic floor. You can practice this with 3-5 breaths a couple of times a day. You may need tactile cues while breathing to synchronize your movements.
- Focus on resting and recovery of your body.
- Walk in and around the bedroom, to a couch in another room, to the bathroom, across the room to get a cup of water, but the focus should be on gentle very short and flat walks while you rest and heal.

Pregnancy & Postpartum Performance Training Guide

Postpartum

3-6 Weeks Postpartum

Emphasis: Mind body connection and total body mobility

Session Focus: Total body mobility, breathwork, as well as pelvic and core control.

Mental Readiness

- Connect with a friend, family member, or mentor. This could look like asking them to check in on you every other day, sending you funny photos, calling you, or you texting them.
- Pick one thing that makes you feel more like yourself such as applying lotion, braiding your hair, eating your favorite meal without holding baby, reading a book, sitting outside with sunshine on your face, etc.
- Some things will feel harder and some things will feel like they breathe life into you. Try to identify what breathes life into you and ask for support to make it happen.

Spiritual Readiness

- Consider Success -” What do I believe about the success of early parenthood?” Did my birth go as planned, is feeding baby going as expected? How is this tied/not tied to my vision of success? Success is not measured in the amount of milk you produce, if you followed your birth plan or not, or if your baby sleeps. Give yourself time and space to reflect on your lived experience.

Nutritional Readiness

- Prioritize nutrient dense snacks throughout the day and staying hydrated.
- If you have support, ask them to bring you a snack and water while you feed baby or right afterwards.

Sleep Readiness

- Take naps during the day as needed and utilize support in the night for night wakings.
- Have your partner bring baby to you so you can nurse laying down or have them feed baby. The first stretch of sleep at night is often the longest.

Physical Readiness

- Focus on a stable and integrated core as you begin to build strength.
- Slow and controlled movements help your breath and body connect through the movement allowing healing to continue.
- Be honest with yourself and your answers on the assessment which will guide your workout intensity.

Pregnancy & Postpartum Performance Training Guide

Postpartum

7-8 Weeks Postpartum

Emphasis: Integration into strength and hip stability

Session Focus: Total body strength exercises using bodyweight movement patterns with a focus on single leg hip stability.

Mental Readiness

- Prioritize short breaks in your day for self-care. Connecting with other postpartum Airmen and Guardians can be helpful to hear shared experiences and feel supported in your postpartum journey.

Spiritual Readiness

- Consider Hope- “What do I believe about the future?”
- How would you explain to your children how you have thrived and struggled with hope in your life?

Nutritional Readiness

- Prioritize staying hydrated. If you are breastfeeding, becoming dehydrated can negatively impact your breastmilk supply. If plain water is unappealing, you can add slices of fresh or frozen fruit to your water bottle to add flavor.

Sleep Readiness

- Have a consistent bedtime routine to help signal you and baby that it’s time for sleep. Continue to take short naps during the day if needed.

Physical Readiness

- Continue to follow the weekly training plan for postpartum

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Postpartum

9-12 Weeks Postpartum

Emphasis: Slow integration into low level plyometrics

Session Focus: Building on previous two weeks and adding in lower level plyometrics to prepare for return to run.

Mental Readiness

- Acknowledge the adjustments of parenthood and allow yourself grace as you adapt. Embrace flexibility and seek support as needed.

Spiritual Readiness

- Consider Legacy- “What will I leave behind?”
- What do you believe parenthood should look like after your children become adults?

Nutritional Readiness

- Continue to prioritize drinking water and eating foods to help sustain your energy throughout the day. If you are breastfeeding and notice your supply diminishing, make sure you are consuming adequate calories and fluid throughout the day. Between 330-400 calories a day are utilized just to make breastmilk!

Sleep Readiness

- Baby will likely have established day and night wake patterns. Continue to collaborate with your partner to help with nighttime caregiving responsibilities.

Physical Readiness

- Continue to follow the weekly training plan for postpartum.
- If you are cleared by your medical provider to return to run, you may begin running following the return to run (R2R) protocol and utilizing the return to run screen.
- 1-2 rest days/week.

For more information: <https://www.acog.org/clinical/clinical-guidance/committee-opinion/articles/2018/05/optimizing-postpartum-care>

Pregnancy & Postpartum Performance Training Guide

Postpartum

13-18 Weeks Postpartum

Emphasis: Slow integration into return to run

Session Focus: Continue building strength and cardio while slowing introducing running. If you are not cleared to run, continue building strength and endurance through the workouts.

Mental Readiness

- Take a moment to appreciate how adaptable and resilient you have been during this new season of parenthood. As you approach the transition of returning to work, you may notice increased feelings of anxiety and moodiness. Think about and plan for things that would make you feel more secure in this transition such as a trial childcare day or practicing bottles, starting with half days or midweek to ease the transition, or writing out your optimal schedule for getting out the door by a certain time. Reach out to your social supports and ask for help from a medical provider if needed.

Spiritual Readiness

- Consider Community- “With Whom Do I Spend My Life?”
- Who can you call to help with your child if/when you are overwhelmed? Are there others who are not local? Explain why.

Nutritional Readiness

- As you prepare to return to work, you may start thinking more about your body’s current size or shape. Especially if you are breastfeeding, your priority should still be to maintain adequate food and fluid intake. Restricting calories and attempting to exercise more to lose weight could lead to injury and diminish your postpartum recovery. If you have concerns about caloric intake, weight, and recovery postpartum, please schedule an appointment with a registered dietitian for assistance.

Sleep Readiness

- Baby is likely to start sleeping in longer stretches at this point. If you are struggling with sleep and insomnia, reach out to your medical provider or guidance and support.

Physical Readiness

- Continue to follow the weekly training plan for postpartum.
- If you are cleared by your medical provider to return to run, you may begin running following the return to run (R2R) protocol and utilizing the return to run screen.
- 1-2 rest days/week

Pregnancy & Postpartum Performance Training Guide

Postpartum

Return to Run (R2R) Screen

This screen assists with identifying when it is safe to restart running postpartum. Running is high impact, so control and stability are necessary for success. You should be able to walk continuously for 30 minutes without any symptoms (pain during or after, any pelvic pain, pain with intercourse, incontinence, feeling of heaviness/bulging in the pelvic floor).

Complete the Daily Readiness Assessment (p. 37) to see if you are fit for running or non-impact aerobic exercise.

If the Daily Readiness Assessment suggest running, you are after 12 weeks, and it has been a week since you completed the impact readiness screen, complete the impact readiness screen. If you have any pain, leakage of urine or stool, heaviness or bulging in the vagina, or bulging/coning of stomach during any of these exercises, we recommend you choose a non-impact form of cardio for that day instead of running and notify your medical provider about your symptoms.

- Single leg balance for 10 seconds on each leg
- Single leg hopping for 10 reps on each leg
- Single leg squat for 10 reps on each leg
- Jogging on the spot for 60 seconds
- Forward bounding for 10 reps on each leg
- Running man for 10 reps on each leg

Return to Run (R2R) Protocol

Maintain at least one day of rest or active recovery between run days. Perform the cardio workout after completing the exercises for the respective workout day. If more than 3/10 pain, incontinence, bleeding, leaking, heaviness in vagina, or bulging/coning of stomach REPEAT the current cardio workouts prescribed for the workout phase you are in even if you are moving on to the next workout phase.



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Additional Resources

- Military One Source New Parent Support Program (NPSP): <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/benefits/new-parent-support-program/>
- DFAS Military Clothing Allowances: <https://www.dfas.mil/militarymembers/payentitlements/Pay-Tables/CMA7/>
- Tricare Maternity Care Covered Services: <https://www.tricare.mil/CoveredServices/IsItCovered/MaternityCare.aspx>
- Tricare Newborn and Well-Baby Care: <https://tricare.mil/newborn>
- Maternity Uniform Pilot Program: <https://www.aetc.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/3225812/daf-updates-program-to-issue-pregnant-members-free-maternity-uniforms/>
- Military Parental Leave Program (MPLP): [https://myairforcebenefits.us.af.mil/Benefit-Library/Federal-Benefits/Military-Parental-Leave-Program-\(MPLP\)](https://myairforcebenefits.us.af.mil/Benefit-Library/Federal-Benefits/Military-Parental-Leave-Program-(MPLP))
- DHA Pregnancy & Childbirth Purple Book: https://www.healthquality.va.gov/guidelines/WH/up/2023-Pregnancy-Purplebook_19Jan2024.pdf
- Hear Her- from CDC (includes support resources/questions to ask medical provider): <https://www.cdc.gov/hearher/index.html>
- DOD/VA Apps (Couples Coach, Virtual Hope Box, Mindfulness & Breathe to Relax): <https://mobile.va.gov/appstore>
- Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS)
 - Beginning from the child's birthdate or date of adoption you have 90 days within the Continental United States (CONUS) and 120 days Outside Continental United States (OCONUS) to [register in DEERS](#). Once registered you have an additional 90 days to enroll in or [change health plans](#).

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Photos used

- [DVIDS - Images - Incirlik keeps moms in shape with Pregnancy PT \[Image 1 of 4\]](#)
- [DVIDS - Images - Incirlik keeps moms in shape with Pregnancy PT \[Image 2 of 4\]](#)
- [DVIDS - Images - MDG cares for Offutt patients \[Image 19 of 50\]](#)
- [DVIDS - Images - nurse midwife \[Image 1 of 2\]](#)