



ELEMENTS

PERSONAL TRAINING

POST PARTUM

TRAINING GUIDE



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INTRODUCTION

Welcoming a new life into the world is a transformative experience, and your body has been through a significant and difficult journey. This eBook serves as a guide for safely and effectively regaining strength, stability, and overall fitness during the first three to 6 months postpartum. The most important thing to note before we begin is that you must be patient. Rushing into anything is not only going to be ineffective, but could also cause long term damage.

Before beginning any exercise program, it is crucial to consult your healthcare provider for a personalised assessment and clearance. I would also recommend doing this throughout because some of the timescales and exercises below may need to be changed accordingly.

Weeks 1-2: Complete Rest and Recovery

GUIDELINE

Focus entirely on recovery and avoid any strenuous activities. Your body has just been through something very significant and very stressful. You need time, rest and recovery in order to heal, reduce inflammation, and allow hormonal levels to stabilise.

Weeks 3-6: Gentle Reintroduction to Exercise

As you start to feel a little better, more energised and rested you can begin to introduce some light activity. For your cardio, getting out for a walk on a fairly regular basis can help to get blood flowing around the body, speed up the healing process and improve your mental health.

It's important to moderate the intensity, you're not out power walking or jogging. Just a light stroll to keep you active. After consulting your doctor, you may also be able to begin some light strength training to help regain strength and stability through the pelvic floor, hips, and core. It's important to keep this extremely light and stop if something doesn't feel right.

Do not do any direct ab training at this stage, it is important that you allow time for diastasis recti to recover (the separation of the abdominal wall). If you do not, you could cause permanent damage.

SUGGESTED CARDIO:

20/30 mins daily walk when you're feeling good. It doesn't matter when, or how, just try to get out and about.

SUGGESTED STRENGTH TRAINING:

3 to 4 days per week

Bodyweight box squats - 2/3 sets of 15 reps

Band rows - 2/3 sets of 15 reps

Bodyweight Glute bridge - 2/3 sets of 15 reps

Pelvic Floor

Kegels - 3 sets of 10 reps - 5 seconds per rep, every day

Weeks 7-12: Gradual Intensification

By now your body is becoming accustomed to moderate physical stress, enough time has passed for you to be able to begin intensifying your workouts a little more by adding some light resistance bands or dumbbells providing you get your doctors approval to do so.

Be progressive but be patient, there are still hormones present in your body which can cause instability so don't rush. Again, I advise no direct abs training in this phase without your doctors clear approval, however, some light pelvic tilts will start to wake your abs up again, and gentle heel slides to help support the recovery from diastasis recti.

SUGGESTED CARDIO:

3-4 moderate intensity cardio sessions per week or brisk walks

SUGGESTED STRENGTH TRAINING:

3 to 4 days per week

Bodyweight/ Dumbbell squats - 2/3 sets of 10-15 reps

Band rows - 2/3 sets of 15 reps

Bodyweight Glute bridge - 2/3 sets of 15 reps

Seated shoulder press/wall push ups - 2/3 sets of 15 reps

Lying pelvic tilts - 3 sets of 10

Heel Slides - 3 sets of 10 each side

Pelvic Floor

Kegels - 3 sets of 10 reps - 10-20 seconds per rep, every day

Week 12 onwards : Slowly return to your previous routine

By now, with your doctors clearance you should be ready and able to get back into the gym and start training again. Remember, you will have lost some strength and that's absolutely Ok. Be patient with yourself as you build up your strength and work capacity.

Remember that your body has been through a lot, you may not be as well rested as you were before, your joints may not be as stable as they were before, so take it steady and progress to heavier weights only when you're ready and feel safe to do so.

SUGGESTED CARDIO:

3-4 moderate intensity cardio sessions per week or brisk walks

SUGGESTED STRENGTH TRAINING:

3 to 4 days per week

Session 1

Barbell/Goblet squats - 3 sets of 8 -12 reps

Seated Rows - 3 sets of 8 -12 reps

Bulgarian Split Squat - 3 sets of 8 -12 reps

Incline DB Bench Press - 3 sets of 8 -12 reps

Side Lying Leg Lifts - 3 sets of 15 Reps

Core

Plank - 3 sets of 45 to 60 seconds

Side plank - 3 sets of 45 to 60 seconds

Pelvic Floor

Kegels - 3 sets of 10 reps - 30-45 seconds per rep, every day

Session 2

Barbell/Goblet squats - 3 sets of 8 -12 reps
Session 2

Hip Thrust - 3 sets of 8 -12 reps

Lat Pull Down - 3 sets of 8 -12 reps

Barbell Deadlift - 3 sets of 8 -12 reps

Push up - 3 sets of AMRAP

Single leg hip thrust - 3 sets of 15 Reps

Core

Reverse Crunch - 3 sets of 12-15

Plank Shoulder tap - 3 sets of 45 to 60 seconds

Pelvic Floor

Kegels - 3 sets of 10 reps - 30-45 seconds per rep, every day

7 Additional Considerations during your transition back to normality.

Breastfeeding

Pre-feed or pump before workouts to avoid discomfort and to ensure baby has a fresh supply.

Wear a supportive nursing sports bra to facilitate easier breastfeeding and provide added comfort during workouts.

Mental Health

Engage in short, guided mindfulness or meditation sessions daily to clear your mind. Dealing with a new born baby can be extremely taxing to your mental health. Don't feel guilty about taking some time to yourself to stop and breathe.

Social Support

Schedule group walks or home workouts with other moms to create accountability and discuss your daily challenges. This can be especially valuable for new mums.

Use video calling apps to engage in remote workouts with friends or family members who are also fitness-conscious.

Physical Constraints

If you can't train as I've suggested above, prioritize low-impact exercises, such as swimming or cycling, which are easier on the joints but will still help you to regain your confidence and help to get you back, fighting fit.

Diastasis Recti

I cannot stress enough how important it is that you work closely with your doctor on this before beginning any of the direct ab training shown above. Patience is key. If you're feeling good, you can integrate heel slides into your routine, which can be helpful for reducing the abdominal gap.

Avoid exercises that exacerbate the condition, like sit-ups or any movement that causes your abdominal wall to bulge out.

Monitoring and Feedback

Take weekly photos and measurements to visually track progress, focusing on posture, muscle tone, and other physical changes.

Nutritional Needs

When you have the time and the baby is sleeping, prepare and freeze healthy meals/snacks in advance, so you have quick, nutrient-dense options on hand rather than reaching for bad food choices.

Use an app or consult a professional to ensure you're getting the right balance of macronutrients and micronutrients, particularly if you're breastfeeding. Jumping right into a calorie deficit and aiming for fat loss as a primary goal is a big mistake.

Lifestyle Factors

Make use of baby's nap time for short, effective workouts or relaxation techniques like deep breathing.

Introduce a bedtime wind-down routine that incorporates stretching or gentle yoga to improve sleep quality.

Individual Medical Conditions

Modify exercises in line with your healthcare provider's recommendations. For example, if you have lower back issues, opt for exercises that are easier on the back.

Keep a log of how different exercises make you feel, including any pain or discomfort, to discuss with your healthcare provider for further fine-tuning.

Ultimately everyone is different, you have done an incredible thing in bringing new life into this world. Don't underestimate how taxing that is on the body. Use this guide as a rough template on how to get yourself back to full fitness and feeling great. But make sure you adapt it where needed based on your own individual circumstances. Be patient, be proud and if it's your first time, welcome to motherhood.

I hope this guide helps to make it easier!

GOOD LUCK
AND TAG ME

@elliottupton
in your post workout selfies,
or better yet, videos of your session.



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