

Pre & Post Natal
PILATES
on the
MAT



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SECOND TRIMESTER (14-27 weeks)

MODIFYING THE ROUTINE

Physical Symptoms

- The mother usually feels better and has more energy.
- For most women, morning sickness is a thing of the past. However, some women will experience nausea for the whole nine months. This is quite a strain as it is sometimes difficult to eat enough and so fatigue and lack of energy will be a factor here.
- The pregnancy is more noticeable as the uterus lifts up and out of the pelvic basin into the abdominal cavity. This may cause round ligament pain.
- The mother may feel the baby move at around 18-22 weeks.
- Usual weight gain by the end of this trimester is between 18-25 pounds.

Psychological symptoms

- The mother is more relaxed about the pregnancy and is beginning to get excited about it. There is usually a sense of well being during this time.

The fetus is around 14 inches long and weighs about 1-2 pounds

Breakdown of second trimester: fetal development

Week 14 – sex is identifiable

Week 15 – kidneys begin to function

Week 16 – lanugo hair forming. Body is growing fast.

Week 17 – fingernails and toenails forming. Heartbeat audible

Week 18 – heartbeat audible. Ovaries forming in females.

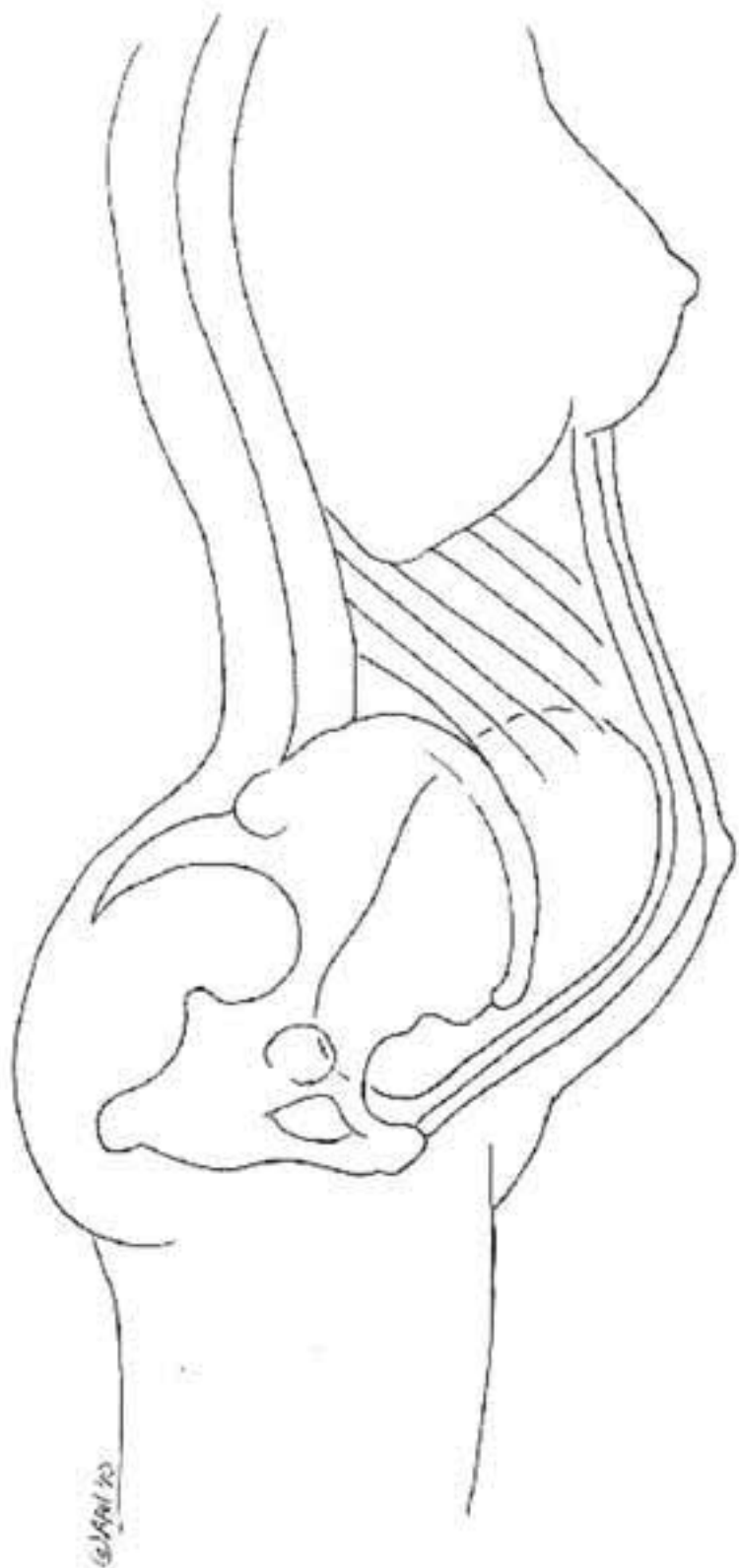
Week 19 – mother can definitely feel the baby moving.

Week 20 – scalp hair forming.

Week 21 – skin is very thin with little or no fat

Week 22 – eyebrows and eyelashes forming

Week 23 – head is about 1/3 total body length. The body is covered with lanugo and vernix. Fetus can suck thumb.



Week 24 – fetus is gaining weight. The lungs are still immature.

Week 25 – gaining weight.

Week 26 – still gaining weight.

Week 27 – lungs secrete surfactant- may survive outside the womb if born now.

By the end of this trimester the mother looks quite pregnant. She may complain about being huge but this is nothing compared to what she will feel like at the end of the pregnancy.

At around five months the uterus will pull up out of the pelvic basin sometimes causing round ligament pain. The round ligament helps anchor the uterus to the pelvis. When the uterus expands quickly, it stretches these ligaments causing some pain. Flexing at the hips can offer some relief

Breathing may become shallower and the rib cage will begin to expand. Use posterior and lateral ribcage breathing to stretch the intercostals muscles in preparation for further growth and upward movement of the uterus. Women in their second or more pregnancies will reach this stage quicker than first timers. **Supine hypotensive syndrome** becomes an issue during this trimester. This occurs when the inferior vena cava is compressed by lying supine. Symptoms include shortness of breath, dizziness and nausea in the mother. It is thought to decrease circulation to the fetus. There are no studies to show if the mother becomes affected first before any symptoms arise in the fetus or vice versa. Turning the mother onto her side rectifies the syndrome.

Exercising in the supine position is permitted for short intervals if the mother has no obvious signs of compression. Alternate with side lying exercises.

The mother may start to complain about backache at this stage. Pelvic tilts are a good way to relieve this problem.

Essential exercises for the second trimester

- **Neutral/anterior pelvic alignment**
The pelvis may be starting to pull forward at this point. Work to sustain stability with the surrounding muscle groups. Trying to maintain neutral is a contraindication of the natural shift forward of the pelvis and lumbar spine.
- **Lateral flexion**
Add more side bending exercises to help keep the intercostals stretched to accommodate the expansion of the ribcage.
- **Thoracic extension**
Continue maintaining strength in upper body and arms. As the pelvis moves forward there will be a tendency to brace against gravity by leaning back.
- **Obliques and transversus**
Will become more stretched at this point. Maintain with gentle exercises using breathing as a tool.
- **Pelvic floor**
Continue with the pelvic floor sequence and relevant exercises. Add more stretching of PF
- **Breathing**
Use lateral and posterior ribcage breathing to stretch the intercostals muscles. Begin to release the body on the exhale rather than tightening

Pelvic Circles on the Ball

All Trimesters

Benefits

Releases tension in the pelvic area.

Gentle massage of the SI area.

- Lie on the floor with feet on the ball knees bent.
- Describe circles with the feet- this will translate to circling the pelvis.
- Repeat both ways.



Lateral Pelvic Tilts

Benefits

Works the pelvic floor and spine.

Opens up the rib cage.

- Sit on the ball with the feet placed slightly wider than hip width.
- Inhale to take the arms over head and clasp the hands together.
- Exhale to flex the spine and press the hips to the same side making a sideways "C" curve.
- Inhale to come back to the center.
- Exhale to the other side.



Pelvic Tilts - Legs Apart

Benefits

Opens up the hips.

Works the pelvic floor.

Stretches the adductors.

- Sit on the ball with the feet placed wider than hip width.
- Open the legs to the side in a turned out position. Arms may rest on the knees.
- Inhale.
- Exhale and press the pelvis forward into lumbar flexion pulling the ball under you.
- Inhale to press the pelvis back into lumbar extension.

**Note - this exercise is contraindicated if there is any pain in the pubic area. It may indicate a separation of the pubic symphysis.*

Tip:

This exercise will stretch the pelvic floor through the obturator/pubococcygeous connection



ARM WORK

ALL TRIMESTERS

Arm work during pregnancy and postpartum should include exercises for external rotation and shoulder adduction to counteract kyphosis. Other arm exercises are also recommended to balance it out.

On the ball with bands

Sitting on the ball while doing the arm work has the added benefit of engaging the abdominal muscles



Arms with Thoracic Extension

Benefits

Strengthens the arms

Supports the thoracic spine in extension

- Sit on the ball with the bands around the thoracic spine and under the arms.
- Elbows are bent.
- Inhale.
- Exhale and lengthen arms while extending torso.
- Inhale to recover.
- Exhale to repeat.

** Any extension of the torso is contraindicated if there is evidence of diastasis recti.*



SIDE LYING SERIES ON THE BALL

ALL TRIMESTERS

External Rotator - Light Weights

- Lie sideways on the ball with the top leg extended for stability.
- The other hand is under the head for support.
- Bend the elbow at a 90 degree angle.
- Inhale.
- Exhale and lift the weight up towards the ceiling.
- Inhale to lower the weight.



Oblique Lifts

Benefits

Works the obliques with support.

- Lie sideways on the Arc with the top leg extended for support.
- Place one or both hands behind the head.
- Inhale.
- Exhale and lift the torso off the Arc.
- Inhale to release.



STANDING EXERCISES

ALL TRIMESTERS

Squats Against the Wall

Benefits

Builds leg strength.

Works the muscles used for the pushing stage (pelvic floor).

Strengthens inner thighs and stabilizes the pelvis.

- Place the ball against the wall and lean the back into it. The ball should be in the lower back.
- Walk the feet away from the wall until knees are behind the toes when bent.
- Place a small ball between the inner thighs if desired.
- Inhale and lower the hips until thighs are parallel to the floor.
- Exhale and press into the heels and squeeze the gluts to push up.



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