

# A PRESCRIPTION FOR SAFE EXERCISES DURING PREGNANCY

Exercises should be done slowly and using proper body posture. Do not perform any exercise that causes pain. Always consult your doctor before starting an exercise program to be sure it is right for you and your baby. Remember, exercise should be thought of as a way to improve comfort during your pregnancy.

### *Courtesy of:*

- Peterborough Physiotherapy and Sports Injuries Clinic
- Chemong Physiotherapy • Lindsay Rehab Health Centre • Lindsay Physiotherapy
- Trent Health in Motion • Lakefield Physiotherapy & Foot Health Clinic

## PREGO-CISES

- Remember your joints are loose during pregnancy due to pregnancy hormones released in your body. Special care should be taken to avoid over-stretching. Stretching should be done slowly without bouncing
- Emphasis needs to be placed on strengthening pelvis and hip muscles to help prevent pain in low back and pelvic regions.
- Strengthening exercises will feel difficult but should not cause pain. Use your judgment with how much you should do. Gradually increase your length of time you hold your strengthening exercises or add weights and resistance slowly. Remember, strengthening can cause injury if an exercise is too difficult. If unsure, consult your doctor or physiotherapist.
- When exercising during pregnancy, drinking water is very important. A fetus cannot control its own body temperature. Water can help keep body temperature down during exercise. If you are sweating, you need to drink even more water to replace the amount you have lost. Try to exercise in a cool environment. Take frequent breaks to avoid overheating.



### **Low Back & Mid Back Stretch**

In sitting with legs crossed, lean forward. If uncomfortable for your knees, try this with legs straight. **Hold 10 sec, 3x.**



### **Hip Flexor Stretch**

Feel stretch at front of thigh in the leg stretched out behind. **Hold 10 sec, 3x.**

*More Prego-cises on Reverse Side* →

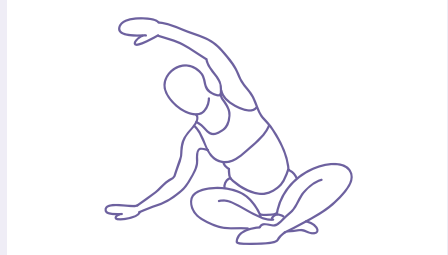
## PREGO-CISES

These exercises help to treat and prevent low back, hip and pelvis pain, including sciatica during pregnancy. Perform these exercises in front of a mirror to help you maintain good body posture. Listen to your body to avoid overworking muscles and tendons. You should feel great after exercising!



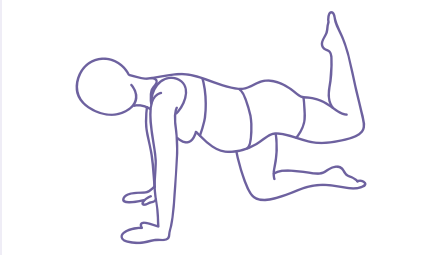
### Gluteal Stretch

Feel in buttock region. To increase stretch, pull knee toward opposite shoulder. **Hold 10 sec, 3x.**



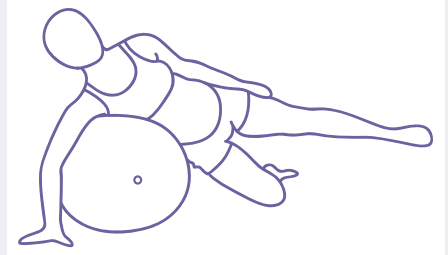
### Rib & Side Stretch

Lin sitting, lean to one side with arm overhead. **Hold 10 sec, 3x.**



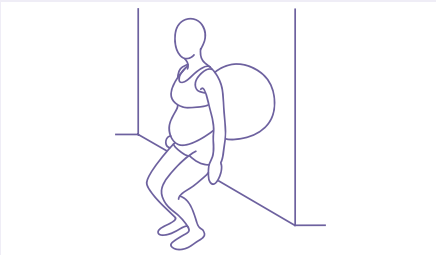
### Gluteus Maximus Strengthening

will help support your pelvis as your belly grows during pregnancy. Keep your back straight, don't arch. Raise your leg with the knee bent. **Hold 10 sec, 3x each leg.**



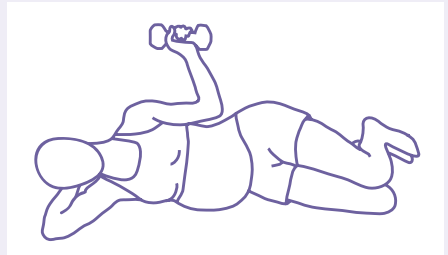
### Gluteus Medius Strengthening

will provide pelvic support and help prevent pain in this region. Lay on your side on the floor or over a ball. Lift leg and **hold 10 sec, 3x each leg.**



### Quad Strengthening

will help stabilize your hip joints. Place your back against the wall (can use a ball for another option). Slide down the wall. Make sure your knees don't go beyond your toes. **Hold 10 sec, 3x.**



### Rotator Cuff Strengthening

Prepare your shoulders for carrying a baby! Lying on your side, externally rotate your shoulder with a 1 lb weight in your hand (a can of soup is approx. 1 lb). Keep your elbow on your side without letting your shoulder roll forward. **2x, 10 each side.**

*For more information contact:*

Peterborough Physiotherapy and Sports Injuries Clinic - (705) 741-2284 - [psic@leadtheway.ca](mailto:psic@leadtheway.ca)

Chemong Physiotherapy - (705) 292-9888 - [cp@leadtheway.ca](mailto:cp@leadtheway.ca)

Lindsay Rehab Health Centre - (705) 324-0404 - [lrhc@leadtheway.ca](mailto:lrhc@leadtheway.ca)

Lindsay Physiotherapy - (705) 324-8512 - [lps@leadtheway.ca](mailto:lps@leadtheway.ca)

Trent Health in Motion - (705) 741-4758 - [trent@leadtheway.ca](mailto:trent@leadtheway.ca)

Lakefield Physiotherapy & Foot Health Clinic - (705) 652-6999 - [lakefield@leadtheway.ca](mailto:lakefield@leadtheway.ca)

(Permission is required to reprint or reproduce)