

# BREASTFEEDING AND EXERCISE

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## MODERATE EXERCISE

- Improves mum's health and has a positive effect on emotional well-being
- Higher level of cardiovascular fitness
- Improved blood lipid profiles and insulin response
- A feeling of well-being
- Improved energy and reduced stress levels
- Enhanced maternal-infant relationship
- Alleviation of symptoms of depression

## MILK SUPPLY

- Exercising while breast-feeding does NOT affect milk supply – it is a good idea to monitor breast fullness when increasing exercise intensity; baby should remain satisfied after feeds and output in nappies should remain the same
- The taste of milk may change if exercising vigorously. This is due to the increased lactic acid content
- Exclusively breastfed babies of mum's who exercise grow at the same rate as mum's with a sedentary lifestyle i.e. breast milk is nutritional regardless

## CALORIES

- Don't skimp on calories
- The body has to work to make breast milk, this activity burns calories. Breastfeeding itself tends to burn an extra 400-500 calories on top of that
- It is vital to replace those calories with a proper diet and even more if doing considerable amount of cardio workouts. Without those extra calories, it's harder to produce breast milk

## HYDRATION

- No need to overdo it - drink to thirst
- Use colour, odour and volume of urine as a guide
- Normal frequency to void is 6-8 times per day
- Be aware of milk supply dwindling
- Keep filled water bottles handy so it's easy to access

## TIMING/PLANNING OF EXERCISE

- After attending our postnatal class and learning about safe return to exercise
- Workout after a feed or pump so that the weight of the breast is less ensuring optimum comfort
- Type and duration of exercise needs to be realistic
- Plan ahead and do what works for your schedule and family
- Don't stress if a day is missed
- If doing exercises with repetitive arm movements, monitor breasts for blocked ducts

## EASING INTO A FITNESS ROUTINE

- Differs for everyone but low impact to start with is best
- Walking, Pilates, yoga, circuit training, and aqua aerobics (if bleeding has stopped and all wounds are healed) are all great options
- Important that you feel good while exercising – if you experience any pelvic floor symptoms link in with our physiotherapy department for further advice

## BREASTFEEDING SPORTS BRAS

Avoid underwire  
Brands: Mummactiv, Natalactive, Hot Milk