

## CAPITAL AREA OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGY ASSOCIATES

### **GUIDELINES FOR EXERCISE DURING PREGNANCY**

1. Regular exercise is better than sporadic activity.
2. You may continue your present exercise program. If starting a new exercise program, slowly build up this activity.
3. After the fourth month of pregnancy, do not perform any exercises while lying on your back.
4. Avoid any exercises that involve holding your breath.
5. Be sure your diet meets both the extra needs of pregnancy and the added demand of your exercise program.
6. Drink plenty of fluids before and after exercise to prevent dehydration. If you feel thirsty while exercising, be sure to stop and take a drink. You should drink at least 8-10 glasses of fluid each day – more if your exercise.
7. Do not exercise strenuously in hot, humid weather or during a period of feverish illness. Body temperature (taken with a rectal thermometer) should not exceed 100 degrees F (38C).
8. Avoid jerky, bouncy motions. Exercising on a wooden floor or a tightly carpeted surface will reduce shock and provide surer footing.
9. A natural loosening of joints takes place during pregnancy. Deeply flexing or extending your joints could be harmful. Activities that require jumping, jarring motions or rapid changes in direction may also be harmful.
10. Prior to vigorous exercise, warm up for five minutes with slow walking or stationary cycling with low resistance. Follow vigorous exercise with a warm down period that includes gentle stationary stretching. Because of the natural loosening of joints during pregnancy, do not take the stretches to the point of maximum resistance.
11. When getting up from a floor exercise, rise gradually. Otherwise, you may experience orthostatic hypotension, a form of low blood pressure that occurs when someone stands up too quickly. Also, walk or otherwise work the legs gently for a short time after rising.
12. If any unusual symptoms appear, stop activity and call our office.