



## Clinical Pilates & Pregnancy by Kate Holland

- Uses original Pilates techniques and modifies them to suit the populations eg athletes, back injuries or pregnant women
- Both use concept of imbalances leading to injuries and the habitual pattern of movement in the body
- Corrects weaknesses/imbalances/movement patterns, makes it possible to avoid and prevent injuries
- Utilises floor/props/ball and specific equipment eg trapeze table, reformer and wunda chair

### **•Benefits- Mother**

- Increase abdominal and back strength
- Increase pelvic floor strength
- Increase stamina
- Improved posture
- Aids relaxation, improves sleep, increases energy levels
- Improves circulation
- Reduces pain levels
- Aids in easy labour
- Hastens post natal recovery

### **•Benefit- baby**

- Improved stress tolerance
- Gain appropriate amounts of weight
- Generally leaner in childhood



### **•Modification during pregnancy**

#### **•1<sup>st</sup> trimester**

- Continue current exercise regime
- Care with nausea, breast and stomach soreness
- Train pelvic floor
- Avoid end of range
- Focus on stability

#### **•2<sup>nd</sup> trimester**

- Avoid supine (lying on back)
- No crunches/ obliques / situps

#### **•3<sup>rd</sup> trimester**

- Increased shortness of breath (SOB) due to position of fetus under ribs
- NO supine
- Slow transitions- may be dizzy and nauseous with movements
- Pillow under belly can help

### **•Post Partum**

- Gentle return to exercise
- Begin pelvic floor ASAP- can have issues with episiotomy numbness/sensory changes
- Can start Pilates as soon as 2-3 weeks post partum
- Joints still unstable esp with breast feeding due to relxin hormone
- Avoid heavy loading esp lumbo-pelvic area



### **•Important tips for exercise when pregnant**

- Diaphragmatic breathing
- “hug the baby” - imagine using core muscles –abdo and pelvic- to hug or support the baby in utero
- Maintain blood flow- eg ankle pumps –can help decrease fluid retention
- Focus on shoulder and scapular strength and control in preparation for baby

### **Summary**

- Overall psychological and physical benefits
- Generally safe
- Care with certain positions and exercise types
- Care daily with changes in wellbeing- can change dramatically day to day- nausea, soreness, SOB, heartburn, constipation, etc
- If unsure always check with GP or Obstetrician
- Ensure adequate nutrition and hydration
- Regular medical checks as can change easily
- Important signs to stop exercise immediately during pregnancy:
  - Vaginal bleeding, leakage, chest pain, severe SOB, nausea, dizziness



About the author: [Kate Holland](#)

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Kate has been with WSC Since: 2007

Kate's professional interests include Pilates; lumbo/pelvic/hip dysfunction and rib dysfunctions. She was a State League Hockey player for 13 years and has worked with Tennis Australia and HockeySA. She conducts Pilates sessions by appointment, and conducts small group equipment classes.