

PREGNANCY STRETCHES

- * Be sure to keep your back straight for all stretches
- * Hold most stretches 15 - 30 seconds; proceed slowly
- * In late pregnancy do not lie on your back for more than 5 minutes at a time.
- * Do not drop the head below the knees, or get up quickly from a lying position; go slowly and in stages.

NECK STRETCHES



Slowly tilt the head so the ear approaches your shoulder. Hold the stretch for 3.-5 seconds at the end range. Next turn to look over one shoulder and hold 3 -5 seconds. Repeat on the other side.

CHEST STRETCH

Clasp both hands behind your back. Now roll the shoulders outward, while extending and straightening the upper back. Extend the head so you are looking up at the ceiling. Hold for several seconds. This is a wonderful stretch for stress in the upper back and shoulders and can be done sitting or standing.



SIDE STRETCHES



Stretch your arm above your head and reach for the ceiling. Then slowly tilt to the opposite side to which you have your arm raised. Do not bounce or extend too far over to the side. Repeat on the other side.

WRIST STRETCHES

These are excellent for the prevention of carpal tunnel syndrome. With one arm extended and palm down, drop the wrist into flexion by gently pulling the thumbs or fingers. Hold for 5 seconds. Turn the extended hand palm up and pull the fingers towards you. Hold 5 sec. Repeat. Shake the fingers out after stretching.



BACK STRETCH



Resting on your knees, stretch forward with the arms, while pulling the hips back. Arch the spine slightly. Stretch to either side to target all low back muscles.

GLUTEAL STRETCH

Lie on your back with one leg raised. Place the other leg across the knee of the first leg and pull the leg in with the arms. For an easier version in late pregnancy, lie propped up on the elbows and simply cross one leg over the other, relaxing the top leg. Lean forward to feel the stretch.



Normal



Easier

HAMSTRING STRETCH

Lie on your back and slowly raise one leg, having a slight bend in the knee. Gently pull the leg closer to you, keeping the back flat on the floor. For a modified version in late pregnancy, use an elastic Theraband to pull the leg in.



INNER THIGH STRETCH



Normal



Easier

Sit with the feet facing each other and knees spread comfortably. Keeping the back straight, lean forward gently.

For a modified version lie on the back, with feet together and relax the inner thighs. Pillows can be used for comfort.

QUADRICEPS STRETCH



Keeping the spine straight and the left hand out to stabilize, bend the right leg so that the heel approaches the buttocks. Keep the thigh in line with the body and use the right hand around the ankle to pull up on the leg. There should be a pull in the front of the thigh and maybe into the groin. Stretch both legs.



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Consult a health professional before beginning any exercise or stretch program.

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