

At around 6+ weeks after childbirth (13+ for a caesarean) you may feel ready to begin a structured exercise routine. This timescale will vary, dependant on the circumstances of your pregnancy and birth. However, many women think this means they have been given the green light to begin exercising in any form again, which isn't the case. Below, we explain what to avoid in at least the first 6 months post-childbirth

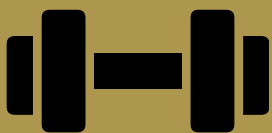


## HIGH IMPACT, HIGH INTENSITY



Your body is not ready for high impact or high intensity exercise right now. This means no bouncing, leaping, sprinting or jumping. Your joints, muscles, connective tissue and pelvic floor are still weak and vulnerable. Any high-impact exercises could cause injury/joint problems now or later in life. Examples of the type of exercises to avoid would be: sprinting, trampolining, skipping, leaping/bounding, box jumps, burpees, high-intensity bootcamp-style exercises, squat jumps and jumping lunges. These type of exercises are not kind to your vulnerable joints or pelvic floor right now.

## HEAVY LIFTING



You would seriously benefit from strength training right now, but by that we don't mean lifting heavy weights, kettlebells, sleds or tyres. Right now the focus should be on postural correction exercises, which are mainly performed using bodyweight alone, or with the use of resistance bands/light weights. Lifting heavy right now, can be damaging to your joints and pelvic floor. If you haven't yet fixed your posture, your technique for lifts will be incorrect, no matter how many times a trainer prompts you to correct it.

## TRADITIONAL 'AB' EXERCISES



Traditional 'ab' exercises such as sit ups, crunches, bicycle abs leg raises and full, unmodified planks should be avoided at the moment. These exercises can cause abdominal separation and pelvic floor dysfunction to worsen and are often performed incorrectly, risking injury to the lower back. Instead, deep core, whole-body core exercises should be performed. The aim being on to improve the strength and stabilisation of the whole core and pelvic floor.

## PERFORMING KEGALS ALONE



Performing endless amounts of kegals, or isolation exercises for the core to try to strengthen the pelvic floor or close abdominal separation won't work. A holistic approach of postural correction, core re-training, breathing techniques, relaxation methods, whole-body strengthening AND fueling the body with recovery-boosting nutrients will prove much more effective.