

## **Pre-natal Clinical Pilates Series – Information for Health Care Providers**

This Pre-natal Pilates Series has been thoughtfully put together by Accredited Exercise Physiologist and Clinical Pilates Instructor Meredith Gadd. The series follows the “*Exercise in Pregnancy and the Postpartum Period*” evidence-based best practice guidelines set out by Sports Medicine Australia (SMA). Summary of SMA guidelines can be found at <https://happyplacepilates.com.au/resources/>.

### **Description of Pre-natal Clinical Pilates Series**

Frequency: 3-5/7

Intensity: Light – Moderate (suitable for beginners)

Time: 30 minute sessions which can be broken up, completed as is or added together.

Type: Sessions vary addressing a range of common pre-natal target areas including; postural (strength and stretching), balance (static and dynamic), inner core unit (pelvic floor, diaphragm, transverse abdominis, multifidus), pelvic stability (anterior oblique and posterior oblique muscle slings), functional capacity (lift, push, pull, reach toes).

Other: Each session has an appropriate warm up and cool down. Small sips of water are encouraged throughout the session. Participants are also encouraged to complete 150min of moderate, low impact, cardiovascular activity per week.

### **Contraindications to Physical Activity and Exercise During Pregnancy – as per SMA Guidelines**

Pregnant women who experience any of the following are advised not to exercise, and seek to seek medical advice:

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|--------------------------------------|--|
| -Ruptured membranes                  | -Growth restricted foetus                  |
| -Signs of preterm labour             | -High order multiple gestation (>triplets) |
| -Hypertensive disorders of pregnancy | -Placenta praevia after 28th week          |
| -Incompetent cervix                  |  |

For women who have a history of any of the following, collaboration is recommended between medical and exercise professionals to ensure the women exercise with caution or at a low level, provided they are asymptomatic at rest.

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|---|---|
| -Previous spontaneous abortion                        | -Extreme overweight/obesity (BMI >30)   |
| -Previous preterm birth                               | -Intrauterine growth restriction in current pregnancy   |
| -Mild/moderate cardiovascular or respiratory disorder | -Other significant medical conditions (e.g. poorly controlled type 1 diabetes, hypertension, hyperthyroidism) |
| -Anaemia (Hb <100 g/L)                                |   |
| -Malnutrition or eating disorder                      |   |
| -Twin pregnancy after 28th week                       |   |



Women who experience any of the following, should seek advise from their care provider before continuing with their exercise program.

- Abdominal pain
- Amniotic fluid leakage
- Calf pain or swelling
- Chest pain/tightness/palpitations
- Decreased foetal movement
- Dizziness or presyncope
- Uterine contractions (premature and/or painful)
- Dyspnoea, before exertion
- Excessive fatigue
- Excessive shortness of breath
- Muscle weakness
- Pelvic pain
- Preterm labour
- Severe headaches
- Vaginal bleeding

**Note:**

Although not listed in the SMA guidelines Happy Place Pilates would exercise caution in women completing this program that may have impaired balance and/or proprioception. Some of the movements are aimed at falls prevention and include static and dynamic balance training methods.

**Benefits of Physical Activity and Exercise During Pregnancy – As per SMA Guidelines**

- Improved muscular strength and endurance
- Improved cardiovascular function and physical fitness
- Decreased risk of pregnancy related complications such as pregnancy-induced hypertension and pre-eclampsia
- Reduced back and pelvic pain
- Reduced fatigue, stress, anxiety and depression
- Decrease in excessive gestational weight gain and post-partum weight retention
- Fewer delivery complications in women who are active during pregnancy
- Prevention and management of urinary incontinence

Please feel free to reach out if you require further clarification.

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