

## **Sport/Exercise**

Current guidelines issued by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists recommend that, following an uncomplicated pregnancy and delivery, an exercise regime comprising of walking, gentle strengthening and pelvic floor exercises can commence immediately.

When the delivery was complicated or a caesarean section (emergency or elective) it is recommended that the return to exercise should be carried out under the guidance of a medical professional (Obstetrician, Physiotherapist or G.P.) Under most circumstances pelvic floor exercises and gentle walking can commence immediately, however it is likely that you will be advised to start more physical exercise after your 6 week postnatal check up.

In all cases your return to pre pregnancy exercise levels should be gradual. The hormonal changes that take place can affect your joints and muscles for up to 5 months after your delivery. Specific advice, from a medical professional, should be sought for return to high impact activity or sport.

There are many positive reasons to get back to exercise after your baby is born, including improved cardiovascular fitness, helping you to lose weight, reducing anxiety and giving you more energy. Research has shown that women who return to fitness after their baby is born are less likely to develop postnatal depression. There are proven health benefits derived from 30 minutes moderate exercise a day. Exercise is fun, so start today, safely.

So, why come to see a physiotherapist?

As specialists in muscle and joint problems, physiotherapists are ideally qualified to tailor individual exercise plans to improve strength, endurance and posture.

So, why see a Women's Health Physiotherapist?

Sally, our women's health physiotherapist has additional training and experience in Women's Health. She will work with you using her traditional physiotherapy skills and her specialist knowledge of the changes that take place during pregnancy and childbirth. Together, you will formulate an individual exercise regime that targets your particular needs and goals. You will be given the tools to improve your muscle strength and endurance, reducing your risk of pain and so giving you the confidence to take on the new challenges that an increasing family brings.