



Reduced Activity? What You Can Do



Some helpful tips...

- ▶ When lying on your side, use a small pillow or towel under your tummy for support.
- ▶ Moving in bed will help you have fewer aches and less stiffness.
- ▶ Get in and out of bed from side-lying. This causes less strain on your back and belly.
- ▶ Stand and walk tall.
- ▶ Use a small pillow or towel to support your lower back when sitting up in bed or in a chair.
- ▶ Use the foot and head controls on your bed for added comfort.

Reduced Activity During Pregnancy

These exercises are safe to do and have been prescribed for you while you are on reduced activity.

Why?

- Promote good blood circulation
- Reduce risk of blood clots
- Maintain mobility, strength and good posture
- Maintain good breathing patterns, reduce stress and anxiety

When and How?

- Do them 4-5 times a day (after meals and snacks)
- Lie on your back or side with the head of your bed flat or raised to a comfortable level
- Do some exercises while sitting in a chair or on the edge of your bed (check with your nurse or doctor).

Breathing Exercises

Slowly breathe in and feel your ribs expand at your sides and back. Pause. Slowly breathe out fully. Repeat 2-3 times.

Walk - Check with your doctor about how much walking you can do.

Leg Exercises

Repeat these exercises 10 times with each leg:

- ▶ **Ankle Pumps:**
Bend and stretch your feet at the ankles (feel a stretch behind your calf).



Caution:

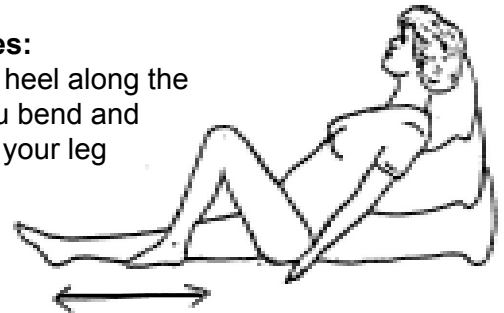
Do not point toes fully (to avoid leg cramps)



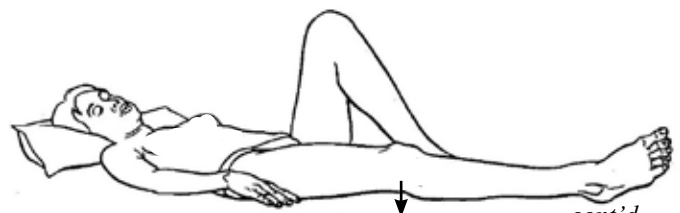
- ▶ **Foot Circles:**
Circle your feet at the ankles. Repeat in the other direction.

Heel Slides:

Slide your heel along the bed as you bend and straighten your leg



- ▶ **Quad sets:**
With your leg straight, press the back of your knee into the bed to tighten your thigh muscle. Hold for a count of 5. Relax.



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Arm Exercises

Repeat each exercise 10 times, slowly.

- ▶ Stretch your arms out to the side. Touch your fingers to your shoulders.



- ▶ Finger tips on shoulders. Circle backward with your elbows.



- ▶ Finger tips on shoulders. Squeeze your shoulder blades together.

Neck Exercises

Repeat each exercise 3-5 times.

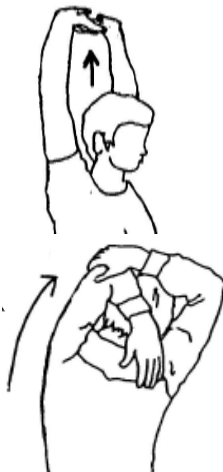
- ▶ Turn your head slowly to one side, pause. Repeat turning to the other side.
- ▶ Slowly drop your ear to one shoulder. Repeat on the other side.
- ▶ Tuck your chin in. Hold for 5 counts. Relax.



Ribcage Stretches

Hold each stretch for 10-20 seconds, repeat 3 times.

- ▶ **Upper Body Stretch:**
Grasp hands together then stretch arms above your head.
- ▶ **Side Stretch:**
Hold your elbow with your opposite hand and lift elbow toward ceiling. Bend to side.



Hip Exercises:

If comfortable, lie on your back with the head of the bed up slightly.

Feet together with knees bent. Move knees apart slowly. Hold for a few seconds. Return to the middle. Repeat 3 times.



Stop the exercises if you feel dizzy, faint, pain, contractions or bleeding.

1. Pelvic Tilt

Tighten your tummy muscles (pull belly button to back bone) and tuck your seat under to flatten your lower back on the bed. Relax and feel the curve return. Repeat 3 times.



2. Pelvic Floor Exercises (Kegels)

Speed'ems: Pull your pelvic floor muscles up and in quickly and strongly as if to stop urine or gas from leaking. Hold for 2 counts and then relax for 2 counts. Do 5 in a row. When this is easy, do more (up to 20 in a row). This exercise is important to help stop leakage when you cough, sneeze, lift or laugh.

Hold'ems: Pull your pelvic floor muscles up and in quickly and strongly as you did with Speed'ems but hold for 10 seconds. Remember to continue to breathe. Relax for 10 seconds. Repeat 10 times.

Check with your doctor before doing repeated pelvic tilt and pelvic floor muscles exercises if you were admitted for, or are currently experiencing, any of the following:

- ◆ an antepartum bleed;
- ◆ preterm labour (irritable uterus);
- ◆ ruptured membranes;
- ◆ an incompetent cervix.

For more information please contact:

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