



# PREGNANCY

## Stretching Guide

This stretching guide is specifically designed for women to use during Pregnancy. It is a gentle overall body routine and is safe to use right throughout your pregnancy. Stretches have been modified to reduce load on the pelvis and target areas such as the legs, hips and buttocks, which can get particularly tight during pregnancy. Spinal stretches are included to help look after your upper back and neck, and assist with building a good foundation for your stretching.

**Getting Started.** We recommend you check in with your physiotherapist if you have any pelvic pain or lower back pain, or are unsure if stretching is the right thing for you, prior to commencing this stretching guide. You can get started at any time throughout your pregnancy, but the earlier the better to keep your body supple throughout the 9 months.

**When?** It is always best to stretch when the body is warm, so ideally after a walk, swim, or Pilates session, but as a minimum at least ensure you get the blood flow pumping with a brisk 5 minute walk beforehand.

**How Long?** Hold the stretches for at least 30 seconds, but more if you feel you are particularly tight. Listen to your body and pay attention to which areas need more work.

**Don't Push.** It is ok to feel a mild discomfort while stretching, but never push into pain. You know your body best, so let it guide you. And remember as your body changes throughout the pregnancy you may not be able to stretch as far. If you have any concerns at all, check in with your Physiotherapist before continuing.

**How often?** Your body is constantly changing over the 9 months of pregnancy, so it's a good idea to work through this guide every second day, to ensure no areas start developing tightness. Some particular stretches may feel better than others at different stages, so remember to tune in to your body and adapt accordingly.

**Breathe!** Don't forget to breathe while stretching, this will assist you to work through any discomfort and help your body relax into the stretch. Breathing also helps you reduce stress levels.





