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Marathon Mom

Pregnant Chicago marathoner finishes race and has baby that day

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A lot of new [moms](#) describe their labor as a marathon. For Amber Miller, that's not an exaggeration.

Miller completed Sunday's Chicago Marathon in 6 hours, 25 minutes. The important stats came hours later, when [baby](#) June arrived at 7 pounds, 13 ounces.

Not quite 39 weeks into her second pregnancy, Miller ran half of the race and walked the other half — with her doctor's permission and her husband on hand for support. Shortly after [mom](#) crossed the finish line, baby signaled the start of another event. The parents grabbed a sandwich and hurried to Central DuPage Hospital.

Doctors agree that exercise during pregnancy is a good thing. It makes for happier moms, easier deliveries, healthier babies. But is 26.2 miles taking it too far? You might be surprised to learn how common it is for expectant mothers to go the distance.

New Jersey [fitness trainer](#) Tara Zimlik has run marathons during three pregnancies, including one at eight months. British runner Paula Radcliffe, who won the Chicago Marathon in 2002 and holds the women's world record at 2:15:25, trained throughout her first pregnancy and delivered a healthy daughter in 2007.

You'll find dozens of message threads online between pregnant women who wonder if it's safe to race and veterans who assure them that yes, it is.

Which is not to say it's for everyone. The general rule is that pregnancy is not the time to start or stop an [exercise routine](#). Listen to your body, and your doctor.

Miller was clearly in better shape pregnant than most of the population at large. She also apparently has a thicker skin. As she and her belly made their way along the marathon route, "everybody just kind of stared," she said. "Lots of interesting comments. It was fun for me to get everyone's reaction."

There were lots of interesting comments posted online too. Most of them could be paraphrased like this: *I'm not a doctor and I know nothing about this woman but a) she's awesome! Or b) she's irresponsible!*

So what do doctors say? The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists guidelines don't address marathons specifically, but generally say that recreational or competitive athletes with uncomplicated pregnancies can continue as directed by their doctors. That's what Miller did.

Based on what we've read, the consensus among moms who've completed a marathon while pregnant is that delivering the baby was a lot harder. Amber Miller did both in the same day. We're gonna go with awesome.