

Pregnant? You Don't Have to Stop Running

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I've confessed many times that I'm not in love with running. I'll go through spells where I'll do it, but I almost always give it up for cardio that I find more enjoyable. After all, who wants to dread their workouts? Given my distaste for running, it amazes me that there are women out there so dedicated to running that they'll run during their pregnancies, even running marathons!

One of those women is Tara Zimliki, founder of [Tara's Boot Camp](#), a mother of two from New Jersey. Tara ran through most of her pregnancy and even ran the New York Marathon when she was eight months pregnant. I can't for the life of me imagine running a marathon right now.

Tara swears by the benefits of running, and even says that her pregnancy was much healthier because of it. Here are her tips on running while pregnant!

Tara's Tips

1. Consult with your doctor

- It may come as a surprise, but some doctors actually recommend running while pregnant. Research shows that women who exercise during pregnancy suffer less lower-back pain, gain less weight, and have better mood and sleep patterns. After pregnancy, they're also less likely to suffer from postpartum depression and will lose weight more rapidly.
- Once your doctor says you're clear to run while pregnant, there are some important precautions to take. Take care to stretch thoroughly—and cautiously. A woman's ligaments become softer while she is pregnant, so it is important to be extra careful when you're hitting the pavement.
- Listen to your body much more closely when you are pregnant and notify your doctor of any changes, however small. Although you may have been an avid runner prior to getting pregnant, you may need to drastically alter your exercise regimen anywhere from the first to the ninth month. Reduce your mileage, slow down, stay out of extreme heat, watch your heart rate and stay adequately hydrated. Remember, your bod is already under stress!



2. Take it easy

- Pregnancy is a time for mental and physical preparation. One of the most beneficial gains from running is that it teaches you about pain. Runners have reported a significantly higher tolerance to pain during childbirth than non-runners.
- Running can be a great way to clear your head and de-stress. Pair your workout with an equally calming, yet less strenuous activity, like yoga.
- Everyone is different, so do what's right for you. Most experts agree a woman can run for up to one hour, three to four times a week, at a moderate to somewhat hard intensity. When running is no longer possible, move on to walking and other cardio activity for the remainder of your pregnancy. And remember, if you're not an avid runner, the eighth month of your pregnancy is not a good time to start.

3. Eat well

- The basic principles of healthy eating remain the same during pregnancy, but a runner deserves special attention. Nutrition is one of the most important aspects of your pregnancy, and you should take it even more seriously when you're still exercising. Get plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean protein for a healthy baby.
- Not only will running help clear your mind, but it will make you feel better about your weight. It could even help you keep your weight gain in the proper range.