

# Healthy Habits to Empower You in Pregnancy, Birth, and Recovery: Pelvic Floor

The pelvic floor is a group of muscles that support the bladder, uterus, and rectum. During pregnancy, these muscles undergo significant changes to accommodate the growing baby. After birth, the pelvic floor muscles need time to heal and regain their strength.

Healthy pelvic floor muscles are essential for maintaining urinary and fecal continence, preventing prolapse, and supporting overall reproductive health. There are a number of things you can do to strengthen your pelvic floor muscles, including:



## Your Best Pregnancy Ever: 9 Healthy Habits to Empower You in Pregnancy, Birth, and Recovery (Pelvic Floor Physical Therapy Series: Pregnancy Book) by Jen Torborg

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- Kegels exercises

- Squats
- Lunges
- Pelvic tilts
- Yoga
- Pilates

In addition to these exercises, there are a number of other healthy habits you can adopt to support your pelvic floor health during pregnancy, birth, and recovery.

## Healthy Habits During Pregnancy

Here are some healthy habits you can adopt during pregnancy to support your pelvic floor health:

- **Maintain a healthy weight.** Excess weight can put strain on your pelvic floor muscles.
- **Exercise regularly.** Regular exercise can help to strengthen your pelvic floor muscles. Choose exercises that are safe for pregnancy, such as walking, swimming, and yoga.
- **Avoid heavy lifting.** Heavy lifting can put strain on your pelvic floor muscles.
- **Practice good posture.** Good posture can help to reduce strain on your pelvic floor muscles.
- **Get enough sleep.** Sleep is essential for overall health, including pelvic floor health.

## Healthy Habits During Birth

Here are some healthy habits you can adopt during birth to support your pelvic floor health:

- **Listen to your body.** Your body will tell you when it is time to push. Pushing too hard or too early can damage your pelvic floor muscles.
- **Use gravity to your advantage.** Gravity can help to open your pelvis and make it easier to deliver your baby. Use gravity by squatting, kneeling, or using a birthing stool or chair.
- **Use warm compresses or a sitz bath.** Warm compresses or a sitz bath can help to relax your pelvic floor muscles and reduce pain.

## Healthy Habits During Recovery

Here are some healthy habits you can adopt during recovery to support your pelvic floor health:

- **Rest.** Your body needs time to heal after birth. Get as much rest as you can.
- **Exercise gradually.** Start exercising slowly and gradually increase the intensity and duration of your workouts over time.
- **Avoid heavy lifting.** Heavy lifting can put strain on your pelvic floor muscles.
- **Practice good posture.** Good posture can help to reduce strain on your pelvic floor muscles.
- **Kegels exercises.** Kegels exercises are a great way to strengthen your pelvic floor muscles.

Healthy pelvic floor muscles are essential for maintaining urinary and fecal continence, preventing prolapse, and supporting overall reproductive health. There are a number of things you can do to strengthen your pelvic floor muscles, including exercises, healthy habits, and lifestyle changes.

By following the tips in this article, you can help to protect your pelvic floor health during pregnancy, birth, and recovery.

### **Further Reading**

- Pelvic Floor Disorders (American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists)
- Pelvic Floor Disorders (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development)
- Pelvic Floor First (UK charity providing information and support on pelvic floor disorders)

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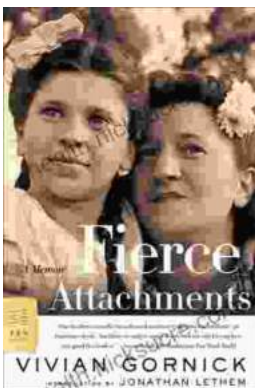
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