

Exercise can reduce the rate of C-section

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Researchers at the Universidad Politécnica de Madrid have found that regular and supervised exercise by experts during pregnancy can reduce the rate of instrumental and cesarean deliveries in healthy pregnant women.

The results of a [physical exercise](#) programme adapted to the special features of gestation, designed by researchers at the Faculty of Sciences for Physical Activity and Sport (INEF) of the UPM, has shown how the percentage of instrumental births and cesarean in women who regularly exercise and supervised by experts are lower than in the control group, that means, those who have inactive pregnancy. This result aims to encourage pregnant women to be actives during gestation, emphasizing the idea that exercise is a factor that can help to improve [life quality](#) in future populations.

A physiological fact as the pregnancy process and birth can determine the [future health](#) and life quality of the female and her baby.

There are numerous difficulties for pregnant women caused by inadequate styles of life ([sedentary lifestyle](#), [poor diet](#), poor healthy posture, excessive [bipedalism](#)) that put at risk the regular development of the pregnancy-birth process. This situation has provoked a high rate of instrumentalized and [cesarean deliveries](#) and consequently, a high risk for the female and her newborn.

In this regard, there many researchers that highlight the need of a healthier pregnancy process as solution for this problem. This interest

can boost the right use of exercise as an improvement in health for a pregnant woman.

A team of researchers of the Faculty of Sciences for Physical Activity and Sport (INEF) has designed and developed a [Randomized Clinical Trial](#) with pregnant women using an exercise programme adapted to the particularities of gestation in order to assess the benefits in maternal-fetal parameters during pregnancy process, particularly to analyze the type of birth.

The mentioned Programme put into practice a join of physical tasks adapted to pregnancy situation. There were three sessions per week, every session lasted 50-55 minutes and they employed various exercises to improve the aerobic resistance, a proper muscle toning of those areas which are usually affected by pregnancy as well as the strength needed for the pelvic floor.

Pregnant women were integrated into the Programme just after the first prenatal care (10-12 weeks gestation) and having obtained the medical approval. Once the pregnant woman was in the Programme remained active during the whole period of gestation, until the week 38-39 of pregnancy. Within the studied parameters, apart from the type of birth, they included the "pregnancy results": a large number of maternal variables (weight gain, blood pressure, gestational age at delivery, possible urinary incontinence) and newborn variables (birth weight, health status of the newborn).

The interesting results of this research have shown how the pregnant women of the intervention group (n=138) that do regular and supervised sports during the pregnancy has a lower rate of instrumental deliveries and cesarean than the control group (n=152) which is the group of women with inactive pregnancy.

Researchers believe these findings can help to encourage pregnant women to stay active during gestation and to expand the idea of doing supervised sport is as a factor of quality life in future populations.

Provided by Universidad Politécnica de Madrid

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