

# Could a simple text message help new mums get into shape?

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Participants will receive text messages asking how their routines are going.  
Credit: Nottingham Trent University

New mums who are keen to lose weight but struggle to find the time are being urged to take part in a research project which could see them benefit from simple exercises and motivational text messages.

As part of the pilot study, sport scientists at Nottingham Trent University want to hear from [women](#) who have had a baby in the last nine months and feel they are heavier than they should be.

Participants will be given a range of quick and easy home exercise routines such as lunges, squats, knee raises and push-ups.

Women will be required to exercise for up to 30 minutes a day, five days a week depending on their individual fitness levels – and will receive regular automated text messages asking how their routines are going.

Depending on how they respond, they will receive follow up messages of encouragement and motivation to keep them on track, or inviting them to contact the researchers for additional advice and support.

It has been found that many women retain their baby [weight](#) post birth, a reason why pregnancy has been identified as a risk factor for the development of obesity. The increasing numbers of women who are overweight prior to pregnancy are also a concern – with one in five British women obese when they become pregnant.

Obese women are predisposed to preeclampsia, diabetes and maternal death, and are twice as likely to gain too much weight during pregnancy.

Participants, who must be over 18, will have their body measurements and weight recorded at the start and end of the project, as well as responding to health questionnaires which will cover information such as diet, lifestyle and sleep patterns.

"There are numerous issues associated with [excessive weight gain](#) during pregnancy and weight retention post pregnancy," said Dr Kirsty Elliott-Sale, a senior lecturer in exercise physiology in Nottingham Trent University's School of Science and Technology.

She said: "Successive pregnancies can increase this problem, due to cumulative weight gain and retention. Some new mums want help to get back in shape, but don't necessarily have the time to go to the gym or join formal exercise classes and groups. Increasing activity with some straight-forward exercises in the home can make a real difference, as well as taking simple steps such as walking more and being less

sedentary.

"There is a need for effective interventions and we want to examine the impact that a text message approach might have on promoting increased activity and encouraging new mums to stay on track."

Anyone interested in taking part in this pilot study should contact researcher Ashley Graham via [email](#).

The [pilot study](#) is being funded by NHS Nottingham City Clinical Commissioning Group's National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Research Capability Funding.

Provided by Nottingham Trent University

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