

A new mom shape-up: stroller walking

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(HealthDay)—The exhaustion of a new baby can have negative fitness consequences as you lose the motivation to exercise and feel there's no time to get to the gym.

But not exercising actually worsens fatigue, makes it harder to lose your baby weight, and increases the risk of chronic health problems down the road.

Don't fret, though: There's a popular way to turn the situation around—[stroller](#) walking.

A small study published in the *Journal of Women's Health Physical Therapy* tested the cardio benefits of walking at about 3 miles per hour while pushing a stroller, and found that it met guidelines for boosting cardio fitness.

Another study quantified the metabolic advantages: The calorie burn is up to 18 percent higher at 3 miles per hour and up to 20 percent higher at 3.5 miles per hour than walking without a stroller.

Of course, there are [safety precautions](#) to take for baby. A traditional 4-wheel stroller isn't safe for [jogging](#) or even brisk walking because it lacks features that protect baby from shocks as you move quickly, especially over uneven surfaces and bumps in the road. Invest in a well-designed 3-wheel jogging stroller. And look for a lockable swivel for smooth surfaces and a fixed setting for rough surfaces.

Jogging stroller features:

- Baby harness and safety tether.
- Large air-filled tires (check tire pressure often).
- Suspension system to absorb shocks.
- Reclining seat.
- Locking, straight-running front wheel.

Also, always look for strollers with safety certification by the Juvenile

Products Manufacturers Association, after meeting the standards of ASTM (formerly the American Society for Testing and Materials). Another thought to bear in mind—keep an eye out for models that accommodate heavier children—their usefulness will outlast a traditional stroller.

Experts agree that even with the right stroller, jogging while pushing a newborn isn't safe for the baby. Baby must first develop neck and core muscles. Usually once baby reaches 8 months of age, running on a smooth [surface](#) should be fine. Wait until 12 months before attempting uneven terrain.

Of course, get your pediatrician's OK first. And if you want to get started sooner, simply walk at a leisurely pace, a good way to build up your own stamina as you both enjoy some fresh air.

More information: Consumer Reports offers more tips for buying all kinds of [baby strollers](#), including joggers.

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