Trunk stabilization

Lower back strengthening
- Rest your hands above your knees, and arch your back.
- Push out your tailbone.
- Lift your shoulders using your back muscles. Your hands will slide up your thighs.
- Repeat 10 times.
- Perform 2 sets daily.

Abdominal strengthening
- On your hands and knees on your bed, relax your back so it sways with your stomach relaxed downward.
- Pull in your stomach as you round your back upward.
- Hold five seconds. **Do not hold your breath.**
- Repeat 10 times.
- Perform 2 sets daily.

For more information

To learn more prenatal exercises, please call one of the locations below:

Mercy Beloit Medical Center
2825 Prairie Ave., Beloit, WI 53511
(608) 363-5500

Mercy Brodhead Medical Center
2310 First Center Ave., Brodhead, WI 53520
(608) 897-8664

Mercy Clinic East Sports Medicine & Rehabilitation Center
3524 E. Milwaukee St., Janesville, WI 53545
(608) 755-8686

Mercy Milton Medical Center
725 S. Janesville St., Milton, WI 53563
(608) 868-5800

Mercy Sports Medicine & Rehabilitation Center-Janesville
557 N. Washington St., Janesville, WI 53548
(608) 754-6000

Mercy Walworth Sports Medicine & Rehabilitation Center
Hwys. 50 & 67, Lake Geneva, WI 53147
(262) 245-4980 or (800) 637-2901

Mercy Whitewater Sports Medicine & Rehabilitation Center
507 W. Main St., Whitewater, WI 53190
(262) 473-0410

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Preventing back pain during pregnancy
Mercy Sports Medicine and Rehabilitation Centers
Throughout pregnancy, your center of gravity will change and so will your body alignment and balance. To compensate, your stance will become wider and your lower back curvature greater. As a result, you may have aches and pains, especially if your core muscles are weak.

These exercises and techniques can help prevent or alleviate back pain.

### Proper posture

#### Sitting

- When sitting, align your ears, shoulders and hips. Use lumbar support to maintain your natural lower back curvature. This gives your upper body better alignment and reduces stress on your neck and shoulders.

#### Sleeping

- When you sleep on your side, align your nose, belly button and inner legs. Place a pillow between your knees.

- Do not lie on your back after the first trimester because the weight of your baby may inhibit blood flow.

### Body mechanics

When lifting, follow these important guidelines to prevent injury:

- Stand close to the object.
- Bend your knees and keep your back straight.
- Tighten your stomach muscles to stabilize your back, but do not hold breath.
- Lift with your legs, not your back.

Even bending can be harmful if performed incorrectly. Do it right:

- Bend at the hips and keep your back straight.
- Support your upper body with a hand on a stable surface.

### Core strengthening

By strengthening your pelvic floor, you improve the muscles that support your growing baby. A strong pelvic floor helps to ease delivery and hurry recovery.

#### Kegel exercises

- Tighten and pull up your vaginal muscles, as if you're trying to stop your urine.
- Hold five seconds and relax.
- Repeat 10 times.
- Perform 2-4 sets daily.

#### Post-pelvic tilt with ball squeeze

- Lean back with a pillow to support your back.
- Push the small of your back into the pillow and squeeze the ball.
- Hold five seconds and relax.
- Repeat 10 times.
- Perform 2-4 sets daily.