

you

## HEALTH TIP

Burn a few calories at the office by taking the steps instead of the elevator or standing while talking on the phone

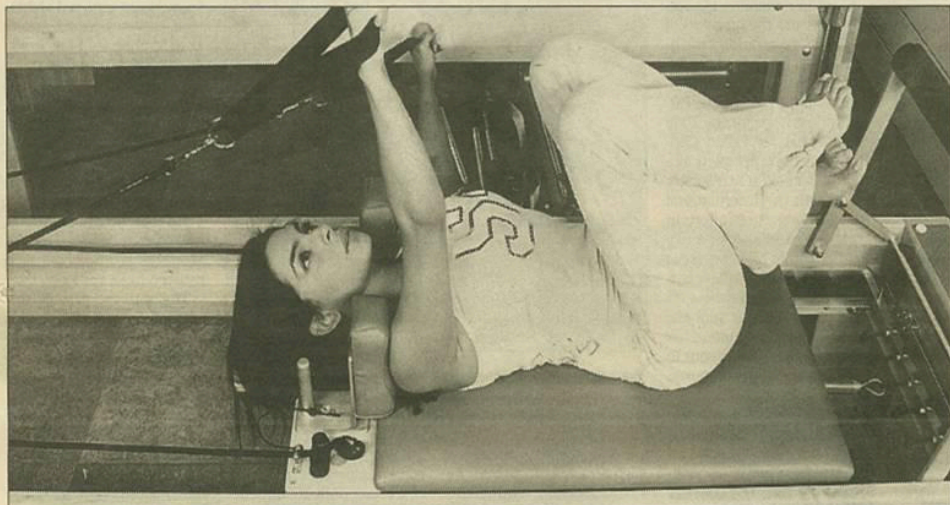
## HEALTH STUDY

Changes in air pressure can cause ear pain in children. A decongestant given an hour before take off may help



# No pregnant pauses

Fitness instructor and expectant mother **Nawaz Modi Singhania** shares her know-how on how to keep fit and breeze through pregnancy



I personally did not gym train prior to pregnancy. I taught six to seven of our workshop classes at the Fitness Centre per week, and worked out about three times a week in our Pilates Hub. So, I got in a well-balanced combination of both cardio and resistance/strength training. Each lasted for approximately an hour. I was at my peak fitness level just prior to getting pregnant.

## VALUE OF FITNESS POST-PREGNANCY

I continued teaching (workshop classes) and also getting in my Pilates Hub workouts right through my pregnancy, but in a modified fashion. There are many dos and don'ts to prenatal fitness, and these were naturally incorporated into my routine.

## EASY TRIMESTERS

Having said that a combination of both cardio and resistance training is important, here are some exercises that are particularly relevant to pregnant exercisers:

**KEGEL EXERCISES** - To keep the pelvic floor firm and maintain control.

**ANTERIOR TILT EXERCISES** - To counter a common postural deviation of pregnancy called lordosis or the sway-back, which the pregnant woman tends to unconsciously adopt in order to compensate for her changing centre of gravity owing to the additional weight around the mid-section. If not corrected, this could lead to back-ache.

**LOWER BACK STRETCHES AND STRENGTHENING EXERCISES** - The lower back is a common area of pain and discomfort during pregnancy.

## OUT WITH MYTHS



Dr Duru Shah's book *Fetal Attraction: Everything Indian Parents-To-Be Need To Know About Pregnancy and Childbirth* co-authored with Dr Safala Shroff and

Ivor Vaz, was released in the city recently. The book includes some easy-to-follow tips for Indian parents as well as entire chapters on pregnancy myths, the role expectant fathers must play, what in-laws must do etc.

Dr Shah says that women need to understand why things happen; most books simply state the dos, the don'ts and the tips, with no explanation on why certain things are done. She elaborates, "In the past, post-delivery, women were asked to stay in bed, put cotton in their ears and get massages everyday. We don't need that now — and there's a reason: Earlier, women were prone to infections, which is why they were kept indoors, in isolation. And because they were bed-ridden, they had to get massages to ensure that clots don't form. Today, the presence of excellent antibiotics does away with the threat of infections. And women are free to become active soon after childbirth."

— ADITI SHAH

back relaxed through stretching exercises and strong with the help of strengthening exercises alleviate back pain and discomfort.

**UPPER BACK STRETCHES** - One of the effects of lordosis (swayback) is that it throws the shoulders backward excessively, causing the upper back to ache and even cramp. Upper back stretches ease the area of pain and discomfort.

**CALF STRETCHES** - Owing to postural changes during pregnancy, the calf muscles can get very

tight, cramp up and ache. Stretching the calf muscles regularly negates this problem.

**QUADRICEP STRENGTHENERS** - It is important to keep the muscles in the front of the thighs very strong during pregnancy in order to help the knees (which are a weak joint essentially) cope with the extra weight of pregnancy.

**HIP TONERS** - As many women tend to sag at the hips during pregnancy, gluteal (butt muscle) exercises help counter this problem.

**ABDOMINAL EXERCISES** - Modified versions of abdominal exercises can and should be done right through pregnancy. Exercises to help open up the pelvic region in preparation for the birth process are extremely important.

## PRENATAL DIET

Of particular importance during pregnancy is the increased intake of proteins, folic acid, iron, calcium, fibre and complex carbs. They play a vital role in foetal development and health of the mother. A qualified nutritionist or an obstetrician would be the best person to determine an individual's dietary needs.

## GETTING STARTED

If you've not exercised before, pregnancy is not the best time to get started! In this case, it's better and safer to just stick to a good old walk and a few prenatal exercises. For those who have been working out prior to getting pregnant, barring a few exceptions, it is fine to continue with low impact aerobics, Pilates, yoga and swimming, with appropriate modifications. Activities which put one at risk of tripping or falling like skiing, rollerblading and biking are inappropriate.

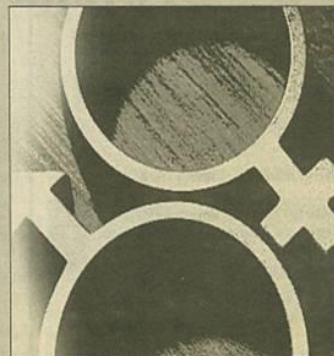
## COPING WITH AILMENTS

When it comes to addressing existing ailments such as migraine, a blood pressure condition, back-aches etc, an expectant mother should consult a qualified medical professional. However, correct exercises can alleviate these problems. But, as each individual is different and has to be judged case by case.

(AS TOLD TO ADITI SHAH)

## ask the sexpert

DR MAHINDER WATSA



■ I am a 21-year-old boy, my girlfriend is 20 and we enjoy a healthy sex life. We have noticed that in pornographic films, the women usually wear stockings that come up to their thighs. Does this increase sexual desire in any way? My girlfriend and I wonder about this often. Why do people indulge in this kind of activity? Can we try the same?

It is a western custom to wear stockings, use your imagination and workout dresses or even stockings or chappals, if it pleases both of you.

■ I am a 27-year-old man. A few days ago I felt an itch in my genitals and when I tried to fix it the skin that covers the head of my penis rolled back. Also, there is a swelling underneath the tip and it burns. Does this require surgery or a simple medication like an ointment would do? The swelling causes me a lot of pain and this is really scaring me. Could you suggest a remedy, because I am worried it will affect my sex life.

If the foreskin has not come to its original position, then quickly see a doctor (urologist). He will decide whether an operation is necessary or not.

■ Although the use of condoms is promoted everywhere, most individuals do not know how to use it properly and effectively. Please enlighten me on how to put one on. How do I make sure that there is a gap left near the tip so as to provide space for the semen? Buy a pack of condoms; usually they have an illustrated diagram. The condom has a nipple, which while rolling on to an erect penis should be squeezed between the fingers so that air does not remain inside. That is where the semen collects.

■ I am a 20-year-old boy and although I have enough knowledge on sex, I lack ample information about things like foreplay and teasing. Will watching pornography help? Foreplay is the time that is most enjoyable. It is when the couple fantasises, touches, caresses, hugs, kisses and exchanges intimate things with each other. This is the most intimate moment to express your love. Develop your own style and do not depend on pornography, because it is usually exaggerated.

Send in your queries to: Ask the sexpert, Mumbai Mirror, Times of India Bldg, Dr D N Road, Mumbai 400001 or email us at mumbaimirror@gmail.com