

5 TIPS FOR SAFE RETURN TO RUNNING

POSTPARTUM

01

NO MATTER YOUR RUNNING GOAL, IT'S IMPORTANT TO RE-INTRODUCE RUNNING SAFELY AND GRADUALLY. HIGH IMPACT SPORTS, SUCH AS RUNNING, CAN CONTRIBUTE TO PELVIC FLOOR ISSUES IF REINTRODUCED TOO QUICKLY, SUCH AS: PELVIC ORGAN PROLAPSE URINARY INCONTINENCE, SEXUAL DYSFUNCTION & PAINFUL INTERCOURSE.

02

DURING THE FIRST THREE MONTHS, IT'S IMPORTANT TO FOCUS ON REST, BREATHWORK, WALKING, ATTENTION TO BODY MECHANICS, AND LOW IMPACT EXERCISES WHILE YOUR BODY HEALS.

03

EVEN IF YOU FEEL SYMPTOM-FREE, IT'S IMPORTANT TO BE EVALUATED BY A PT IN THE FIRST 4-6 WEEKS POSTPARTUM TO PREVENT PELVIC FLOOR ISSUES AND SET A FOUNDATION FOR GETTING BACK TO ALL OF YOUR DESIRED ACTIVITIES.

04

- GRADUALLY RETURN TO RUNNING MONTH 3-6 BY STARTING SLOW, WITH WALKING AND RUNNING INTERVALS.
- INCREASE VOLUME BEFORE INTENSITY.
- CROSS TRAIN AND INCORPORATE REST DAYS TO MAXIMIZE SUCCESS.

05

RED FLAGS TO WATCH FOR:

- LEAKING URINE OR FECES
- CONSTIPATION
- PAINFUL INTERCOURSE PELVIC AND/OR LOW BACK PAIN
- HEAVINESS, PRESSURE, OR BULGING IN THE LOW PELVIS

RETURN TO RUN ASSESSMENT

Load management testing: In order to ensure a safe return to running, postnatal mothers should be able to complete the following without pain, heaviness, dragging or incontinence.

- Walking 30 minutes
- Single leg balance 10 seconds
- Single leg squat 10 repetitions each side
- Jog on the spot 1 minute
- Forward bounds 10 repetitions
- Hop in place 10 repetitions each leg
- Single leg 'running man': opposite arm and hip flexion/extension (bent knee) 10 repetitions each side

Strength testing: In order to ensure key muscle groups are prepared for running, each of the following movements should be performed with the number of repetitions counted to fatigue. Aim for 20 repetitions of each test.

- Single leg calf raise
- Single leg bridge
- Single leg sit to stand
- Side lying abduction

NOTE:

Weakness in these areas of strength testing should not be considered a barrier for return to running but instead identify where strength work can be directed. Working with a Physical Therapist can help address these areas and get you back on a running program without increased risk of injury.

