

# Tree Top Hospital: Antenatal Rehabilitation



## Our Rehabilitative Centre

Rehabilitative Centre at the Tree Top Hospital includes all treatments given to patients which are designed by qualified therapists. Our specialized healthcare team is dedicated to improving, maintaining or restoring physical strength, cognition and mobility with maximized results, after a person has suffered an illness or injury. Some services include, but are not limited to:

- Pain management
- Musculoskeletal conditions (orthopaedics)
- Neurological conditions
- Cardiothoracic conditions
- Orthopaedic conditions
- Sports injuries
- Paediatric conditions such as Cerebral Palsy, Autism, Downs Syndrome and delay milestone management.
- Pre and post-operative conditions
- Geriatric conditions
- Speech and Language disorders such as fluency disorders, Voice disorders, Articulation disorders and Aphasia
- Hearing disorders such as Presbycusis, tinnitus and auditory verbal therapy



## Antenatal Exercises: What are they?

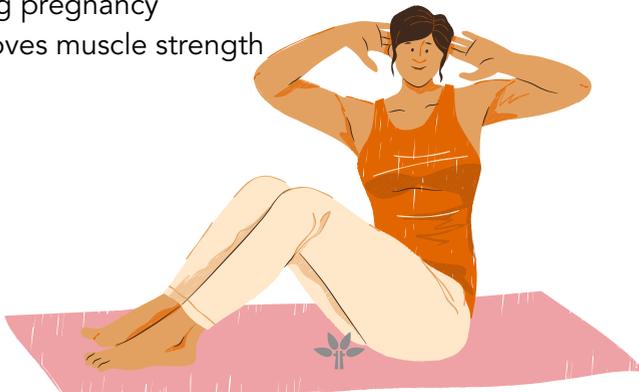
Antenatal exercises aim to improve the physical and psychological well-being of an expectant mother for labour and preventing pregnancies-induced pathologies by various physical means. It generally includes low-impact aerobic exercises and stretching exercises.

During the first trimester, pregnancy brings certain changes in the body. Some of which include, but are not limited to, morning sickness, fatigue or low energy levels, nausea, and increased secretion of the Relaxin hormone.

Exercise helps to overcome these changes and improves the mood and energy level of the mother. Healthy pregnant women should exercise for at least 150 minutes weekly, or 20 to 30 minutes daily in moderate to vigorous aerobic intensity.

### Advantages of Antenatal Exercise:

- Reduces morning sickness
- Reduces insomnia, anxiety and stress
- Reduces other pregnancy-related complaints (fatigue, leg cramps, oedema of extremities, .etc)
- Prevents excessive weight gain during pregnancy
- Improves muscle strength
- Improves core stability
- Maintains muscle length and flexibility
- Improves glycemic control
- Improves posture
- Enhances relaxation
- Prepares for physical demands of labour



## Hip opening stretches to do during pregnancy

Pregnancy comes with more than its fair share of surprise of aches and pains. These 3 hip opening stretches for pregnancy ease aching hips and can even help move baby into a more optimal position for birth.

### Butterfly or tailor pose

This is a fantastic hip-opening stretch for the inner thighs, hips, and groin. This pose not only assists to widen the hips, but it also helps ease aches in you lower back. Here's how to do it:

- Sitting on the ground, bring the soles of shoes together, allowing your knees to point out to each side
- Grasping feet or ankles, draw both heels in as close to body as comfortable
- Lean forward slightly and hold that position. Focus on taking big deep belly breaths.
- For an even deeper stretch, press your thighs down with your hands or elbows to bring your knees closer to the floor.
- Hold that pose and focus on the stretch and your breath.



## Squats or Garland Pose

- Stand with feet facing forward or slightly outward, shoulder-width or slightly wider than hip-distance, apart
- Slowly and fluidly bend your knees and lower your body, extending the arms out in front for balance if helpful.
- Balance your weight on the balls of your heels and pause.
- Breathe and slowly rise back up and then repeat the action.



## Seated Straddle

- Extend both legs out wide with your feet flexed.
- Press your pelvis and hamstrings into the floor to help straighten your spine.
- Stay in this position if this is enough of a stretch for the backs of your legs or walk your hands out in front of you.



## Lunges

This exercise put more emphasis on the gluteus, hamstring and quadriceps:

- Stand straight, take one step forward.
- Now, lower yourself and try to maintain front leg vertical so that gluteus and hamstring will be loaded rather than quads.
- Pressing the leg down straighten yourself.



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## Stretching exercises

The upcoming sections aim to provide you with an insight for stretching exercises which you can do at your own pace.

Before continuing, we aim to provide information on how to do specific stretches and exercises and encourage that you first speak with a professional to see if there are any precautions that you should take before practicing them.

### Pectoral Stretch

This exercise aims to help opening the chest and prevents the development of round shoulders. Here's how its done:

- Kneel on an exercise mat
- Adopt a comfortable position while kneeling
- Keep your hands by the side or clasp them behind your head
- Slightly bend the head forward and let the elbows expand and open your chest
- Repeat 3 to 5 times



## Calf Stretch

The more the available length of Tendo-Achilles, the more force production during push-off phase of walking and greater stability. Here is how to do it:

- Place a rolled towel, mat, or foam roller on the floor
- Place the ball of the foot on the towel, mat or roller and the heel on the floor, remember to keep your leg straight!
- Hold each stretch for 20 to 30 seconds
- Repeat on the other side and perform 3 to 5 sets on each side



Remember: we highly recommend that you consult an expert before trying these exercises to prevent any injuries during them



## Piriformis Stretch

This type of stretches has an important role in pelvis stabilization and activities of daily living (ADLs). Here's how to do it:

- Sit on the chair with neutral pelvis
- Place your foot over the opposite knee and bend forward from the hips keeping your pelvis neutral, until you feel the stretch
- Hold it for 20 to 30 seconds
- Repeat for the other leg as well
- Try to do 3 to 5 sets



## Hamstring Stretch

Shortening of hamstring could be a cause of back pain and pelvis misalignment. This stretch can be performing in various positions (bilaterally or unilaterally). Here's how its done:

- Sit in long sitting position, bend one knee and try to reach your extended leg as much as you can
- Hold it for 20 to 30 seconds and repeat it for 3 to 5 times each side
- During your first trimester, supine lying hamstring stretch can also be done



## Strengthening exercises

There are a few exercises which improve and enhance your strength which could help your body be prepared for the delivery of your baby. These exercises include:

### Bridging

This exercise put more emphasis on the gluteus maximus and other larger postural muscles.

- Lie on your back, hands by your side, knee hip-width apart and heel under the knee.
- Keep your pelvis neutral, now squeeze your buttocks and lift the pelvis up.
- Hold it for 10-20 seconds, breath regularly.
- Come back to the starting position slowly.



### Squats

This is a great exercise for all the lower extremities muscle majorly focuses on gluteus maximus.

- Stand feet slightly more than hip width apart.
- Clasp the hands and bring them forward.
- Squat while exhaling and make sure knees won't go beyond the great toes.
- Press down and straighten the legs while going up.
- Ensure the stability.



## Daily activities that help!

Even if you do not have the time to give specifically to exercises, do not worry, because small changes in your daily activities can also give similar benefits! Here are some simple lifestyle changes you can make:

- Staying active, unless there are risks associated for your body
- Walking, squatting, lifting, and lunging activities should be included as far as possible
- Make sure you stay hydrated throughout the day
- Don't compete! Pregnancy is a journey, not a competition.
- Try to breathe calmly and avoid holding your breath
- Don't exhaust yourself while doing exercises
- Always make sure you take enough rest

## Cardiovascular Exercise

The intensity of the workout will be decided by an assessment on pre-pregnancy fitness level. It is important to choose any aerobic activity based on one's interests, such as walking, swimming, hiking etc. So if walking is the only cardio workout done by an individual, it can be practiced 20-30 minutes 3-4 times a week safely.

