

Personalizing Pilates/Pre-Natal workout

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Hi there! First, I need to apologize. My pregnant model went into labour four weeks before her due date, on the day before we shot these photos. She had a healthy baby girl so all is well, but I had to make a last minute substitution (me!) for the photos so please forgive me for not showing a pregnant model.

Exercise 1 – Stretches the spine and strengthens the arms

We're going to start in a hands and knees position. Place your hands under your shoulders, knees under your hips. Round your spine up to the ceiling letting your head hang heavy (1a). Arch your spine letting your tail reach up and back (1b).



Exercise 2 – Stretches your waist, abdominal and back muscles

Still on your hands and knees; look over your shoulder. Keep the weight equal on both knees as you bend around to the side.



Exercise 3 – Child’s pose to stretch the lower back

**** Tip –** Place some pillows under you so that you can rest your head and chest on the pillows in this position.

Move your knees a little bit wider apart if you need to, let your hips fall back to your heels and let your chest and head rest on the pillows. As your baby gets bigger, you’ll need to adjust the number of pillows that you use. Stay here and take some easy breaths in and out.



Exercise 4 – Strengthens pelvic floor, tones arms, shoulders & legs

Start on your hands and your knees. Reach one leg out behind you and hover it over the mat, keeping your hips level (4a). Add a reach of your opposite arm (4b). A tennis ball is optional for this exercise to give you feedback that your pelvis is level.



4a



4b

Exercise 5 – Strengthens your upper back and stretches your chest

**** Tip** - As your baby gets bigger, this position will become more challenging because your centre of gravity is shifting forward. If this tall kneeling position becomes uncomfortable for you, this exercise can be done seated on a chair. Please use a chair that has no arms.

In a tall kneeling position, turn your arms so that your palms face forward. Lift your heart up and out of your chest (5a). Slowly press your arms back by pulling your shoulder blades closer together (5b).



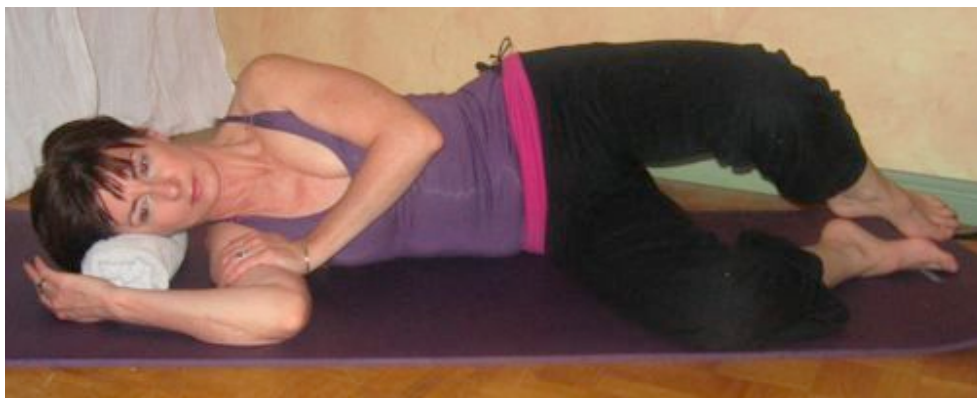
5a

5b

Exercise 6 – Strengthens your deep ab/back muscles as well as your hips

**** Tip** – Add some pillows between your knees if this position is uncomfortable for your hips.

Lie on your side. Your knees are bent and forward. Keep your feet touching each other as you exhale and open your top knee like a clamshell. Release your knee down.



Exercise 7 – Strengthens the outer hip muscles and pelvic floor

Lie on your side with your bottom leg bent and forward. Straighten your top leg. Lift your leg up to the height of your hipbone (7a). From here, lift your top leg 6 inches (7b) and lower it back down to hip height (7a).



7a



7b

Exercise 8 – Strengthens your hips, pelvic floor and helps train standing balance

** Tip - If you need a bit of help with your balance, you can always stand beside a wall and place one hand on the wall for stability.

Stand with weight on the four corners of your left foot. Lift your right heel off the floor, keeping your toes down (like wearing a high heel). Let your left hip slide out to the left side as shown in the photograph. Slide it back underneath you so that your hips level.



Exercise 9 – Strengthens your hips, pelvic floor and helps with your balance

** Tip – Stand by a wall and hold it to help with your stability as you balance

Stand on the four corners of your left foot. Look forward at your horizon. Engage pelvic floor muscles as you balance on your left foot. Hold for a few seconds. Switch.

