

7 October 2014

Media Release for immediate use – Realistic Body Positive Advice for New Mums Returning to Exercise

From: NZ Register of Exercise Professionals



Realistic Body Positive Advice for New Mums Returning to Exercise

There is an abundance of well meaning exercise advice for new mums, with much of it based on personal experience rather than fact, and most of it centred on getting 'back in shape' rather than 'being healthy'.

When you are ready to get active in the postnatal period, it is important to get the right advice and support so that you can get the positive benefits of exercise and activity, that fits in with your goals and your circumstances.

Just as every baby is different, so is every mother, so a one-sized fits all approach or a goal of returning to a pre-pregnancy size quickly will not be helpful for every woman.

Elly McGuinness is a Christchurch based mum, author, and REPs Registered Trainer at Natural Balance and has this to say; "Remember that we are all unique individuals with different genetics, present and previous health and exercise history, and barriers to success."

Exercise and physical activity have many benefits as you adjust to the needs of a newborn, and as your body recovers from pregnancy. So it's worth getting started, focusing on the health benefits to you, rather than just weight loss.

The key advice in the first few weeks after giving birth is to take it gently. If you believe the media and stories you would believe most women bounce back and into an exercise routine straight away, but the truth is a little different. The benefits of gentle movement and walking can be enjoyed by most soon, but 4-6 weeks after birth is the recommended time to start looking at a structured programme.

A return to exercise is not all about getting your pre baby body back, as exercise plays an important role in post natal recovery in areas such as core and pelvic floor strengthening, posture for feeding, and the feel good benefits at a time that can be overwhelming. Structured doesn't have to mean a return to full on exercise.

Lynda Lovatt is a Wellington REPs Registered Trainer at PUFF Fitness which specialises in women's' health. She recommends pelvic floor exercises and care after having a baby. During pregnancy and childbirth, the pelvic floor becomes weakened as a result of hormonal changes and increased load through the pelvic floor. It may also become damaged through excessive

stretching or tearing during birth. The pelvic floor muscle helps to support the bowel, bladder and uterus. It also helps with sexual sensation. If it becomes weakened, new mums may experience incontinence or prolapse of organs may occur.

Your post-natal journey is not just for the first year of your baby's life. For those who struggle to fit it all in, Lynda Lovatt has this advice "When factoring in exercise try to associate it with something you already do in your day. You could do pelvic floor exercise while feeding the baby. Cardiovascular exercise may be your scheduled walk to the shops."

There are many postnatal exercise classes run by REPs Registered Instructors that allow you to exercise along with your baby, doing exercises that are suitable for you as a new Mum in the company of other parents. Or if you prefer the one on one approach, choose a REPs Registered Trainer with experience working with new Mums.

REPs Registered Exercise Professionals also have access to range of informative information brochures called the Tell Me More Series covering topics including Pre/Post Natal exercise advice, and the Core and Pelvic Floor. Speak to a REPs Registered Trainer for more information and advice.



Contact Details:

For interviews and further information, please contact Richard Beddie Chief Executive, Exercise New Zealand richard@exercisenz.org.nz, telephone 0800 66 88 11, or Stephen Gacsal REPs Registrar, at stephen@reps.org.nz telephone 0800 55 44 99 - www.reps.org.nz

Who is the NZ Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs)?

REPs is an independent non profit organisation administrating the New Zealand exercise professionals register to ensure that the public receive safe and effective exercise advice. Using REPs Registered Exercise Professionals is the "Warrant of Fitness Check" that exercise professionals and facilities meet New Zealand and internationally benchmarked standards to deliver exercise advice and instruction. REPs is affiliated globally to other national exercise professional registers representing over 70,000 exercise professionals through the International Confederation of Registers for Exercise Professionals (ICREPs) - www.icreps.org.

