
Prenatal Strength

**A Guide to Working Out
While Pregnant**

&

A Memoir:

Delivery Room Dramas

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&

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Forward

I met Jessica at a friend's party when I was 22 years old. She was 20 at the time and the first thing she ever said to me was "Hey dude, your fly is down." It wasn't a *love at first sight* beginning by any stretch of the imagination. I thought she was sweet on my friend who I came with. She doesn't even really remember these events.

Not me. I remember every single encounter I had with this woman in detail. I remember seeing her at the gym the day after the party, using the leg curl machine and working so hard that her legs were shaking as she tried to get that last rep. I remember seeing her and her mother pull up next to me in her blue pickup truck at the gas station and the puzzled look she gave me when I told her that I worked as a "draftsman" (she thought I said, "trash man"). I remember driving around the gym parking lot looking for that truck in hopes that she'd be there. And I remember the night she gave me her phone number, I looked at that little piece of paper once and instantly committed that number to memory and never had to look at it again.

The fact is, I was sweet on her. I found someone in my social circle who shared my interests, my beliefs, was easy going and casual to the point of wearing sweatpants to parties. She was attractive without even trying to be and I liked that she didn't wear makeup or have some fancy haircut.

On our first date, I was extremely nervous. I was not looking for a long-term relationship and I knew that if I went down this road this was a girl that I could marry. She was the kind of woman my dad talked about, a "good girl" - the kind of woman you meet at church. After a wonderful day together, I dropped her off and didn't even attempt to kiss her. I don't know what I was thinking, but I do know that afterwards I thought I had missed my opportunity. So, when I got home I called her and asked if I could come back over to give her a kiss. With butterflies in my stomach, I drove back to her house, knocked on the door, kissed her, and left without saying a word.

Yeah, Mr. Smooth!

Over the next few months as our relationship grew, so did my aspirations. I never had dreams or visions for my life until meeting Jess. I remember our conversation on the way to the beach when I decided I wanted to go back to school. Exercise was something that not only did I enjoy doing, but I enjoyed reading and learning about as well, so it only made sense to take college credit for studies that I was already doing.

When we first learned about kettlebells, it was actually her that suggested that we get a set. I was competing in strongman at the time and was amassing quite the collection of training equipment. I was more than willing to add kettlebells to the mix. When that first order of 'bells arrived, I snatched them out of the box (literally lifted them overhead). I was strong but I had no idea how to use these funny looking weights. It wasn't until I met Pavel Tsatsouline, attended a workshop with Steve Cotter and eventually got certified as an instructor that I started developing the technique and finesse required to properly lift kettlebells.

In 2006, as a married couple, Jess and I both graduated from college, her degree in nursing and mine in exercise science. We started working in our respective fields immediately. While she remained stable as a bedside care nurse at Johns Hopkins, I had a whirlwind of a start to my career.

Now a certified strength and conditioning specialist with a kinesiology degree, I first called my old high school to see if there were any opportunities strength coaching. I ended up working with the football and track and field teams, which led to me teaching an evening fitness class for the community college that was held in the high school weight room. That same year I took a part-time position as a senior fitness specialist at a retirement community and six months after that an opportunity arose for me to work with the Baltimore Ravens as a strength assistant. That same year, in 2007, I won the Maryland Strongest Man contest, taught my first kettlebell class at the park and we had our first child.

In the span of 18 months, I worked with every conceivable background; kids, adults, geriatrics, elite athletes, disabled, and of course, pregnant women. Those who I thought I most wanted to work with (athletes) I found weren't as enjoyable to train as those who needed it most (senior citizens). I was fortunate that in those early years of my career I gained a perspective on strength training that I think few people understand until it's too late.

I've seen the effects that strength training can have on people both good and bad. I've seen people age gracefully; live active and independent lives until the day they die because their exercise program kept their bodies strong and their minds sharp. I've also seen people beat their bodies up in the pursuit of strength; tear muscle from bone and blow out joints because competition has taken priority over health.

I've also seen what happens when you don't strength train and that is

a worse fate than the people who overdo it. Imagine being trapped in a body that doesn't work the way it's supposed to; to be held captive by low energy and be unable stand, walk or play with your grandchildren. There is a not so fine line that separates too much exercise and not enough, but one thing is for certain is that strength cannot be separated from health. It is not possible to have one without the other.

What is the one thing that you hope for your unborn child? It is for them to be healthy. Regardless of gender, as parents, we want healthy babies. It helps greatly when the mother is healthy and strong.

In this book, my wife has detailed her fitness journey through her pregnancies in a way that I couldn't be more proud of her. This is a piece of work over 10 years in the making. I have learned more about what she went through for five children and four pregnancies than I ever knew. Her memoirs offer a glimpse into her mind that I never understood until now. It's interesting the different perspectives that we had during these major life events. If men are from Mars and women are from Venus, I feel like I've been to Venus and learned some of the language.

The fitness information contained in this book will benefit any woman; prenatal or postpartum, and the kettlebell will offer a lifetime of convenient use for those days that you don't have the time or energy to get to the gym. It is our hope that you and your family grow strong with this book serving as a guide during this developmental time in your life.

In health and strength,

Dan Cenidoza

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Introduction

About me

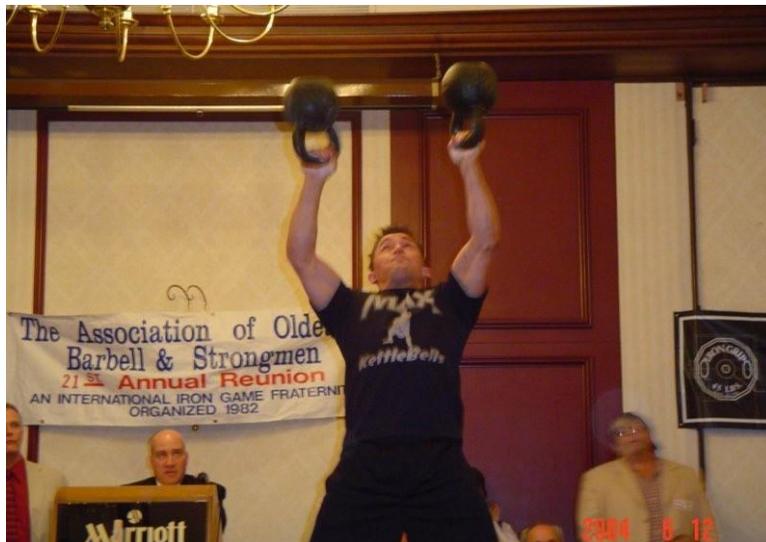
Let me introduce myself, my name is Jessica Cenidoza. I am so excited that you are a fellow kettlebeller and am happy to share in your pregnancy journey. I was introduced to kettlebells in 2003. Ever since, I have been actively learning and lifting kettlebells. I even cancelled my gym membership because a kettlebell was all I really needed. I married Dan Cenidoza, the man of my dreams, in 2004. We had our first child in 2007, second child in 2009, third child in 2012 and fourth and fifth child (twins) in 2014. What a busy and blessed 10 years it's been!

This book has been a dream of mine for a few years now. When I was first pregnant and looking for advice on kettlebell training while pregnant, I could hardly find anything. I wanted other women, who share the joy of kettlebells, to be confident in their training and know that exercise is great, especially when you're pregnant.

Completing this book was a huge task for me. I mean where do you find the time, right? With seven people in the house, there's never a dull or quiet moment. Well, maybe after 9pm when they turn into angels and sleep. Then it's hubby's turn to get all my attention. He deserves it too! So, between nap time and after bedtime, this book was born. YAY!

Along with being a wife and a mother, I am a certified massage therapist and registered nurse. I became a certified massage therapist in 1999. After practicing for a few years, I went back to school and graduated in 2005 with my RN. Throughout all these years I have loved exercising and working out. There's just something about staying physically active that calms me, mental clarity as I call it.

I first saw kettlebells at a strongman association dinner with Dan, where two men put on an amazing demonstration. It played out like an acrobatic show. Those kettlebells were flipping and flying, twisting and turning, going left then right. It was awesome! Not only did it look awesome, but it appeared to be lots of fun. Who would have thought an exercise program could be so enjoyable? It was a sight to see!



After seeing the kettlebell demonstration, I instantly wanted to try them. Right then and there at dinner I looked at Dan and told him I wanted to get some. He just looked at me with a huge grin on his face. I later found out that he had already planned on getting some but just hadn't figured out how to convince me that he needed to spend another couple hundred dollars on equipment. As soon as we got home he put in the order, and within a week our kettlebells arrived.



We both watched videos and read books on kettlebell training. And from there we started our lifelong strength journey with kettlebells. To this day, we both love kettlebell training and all that it incorporates. Kettlebells have changed my life. I am stronger and have more endurance than ever before. Kettlebells offer a wide variety of exercises and help develop your cardiovascular endurance as well. The best things about kettlebells are you can use them anywhere and get a great workout in very little time. After I had my first child I realized just how little time I had for myself, let alone time for a workout.

Meet my other half

My husband, Dan, is a personal trainer, professional performing strongman and owner of Baltimore Kettlebell Club. He has made a career out of kettlebell training and teaching people how to get strong. Dan has a degree in exercise science from Towson University, several training certifications and is a former winner of the Maryland Strongest Man contest.



Dan tearing a phone book during one of his strongman shows in downtown Baltimore.



Grand opening of Art & Strength. Dan is doing one of his bending steel demos.

He started his own business, Be-More Training, in 2006. He began training clients from our home gym and in 2011 opened a gym called Art & Strength (which was later renamed to Baltimore Kettlebell Club). I am pleased to say that we still have a small gym in our garage, mainly for me, but Dan still works out at home from time to time. We have five kettlebells and a barbell, more than enough for me to stay busy with, which makes it easy and convenient for me to get a workout in during the day.



I am thankful to have Dan's extensive kettlebell knowledge at my disposal, not to mention my own personal trainer, even though I don't always like to listen to him or let him train me. He has helped me a great deal and continues to help me explore new variations of exercises by helping me keep it fresh and exciting. However, on the topic of pregnancy and kettlebells, I had to figure things out for myself, with some guidance from Dan. He helped me come up with variations to better accommodate my growing belly.

Section 1 - Helping your body feel good

Why stay active?

Staying active is one of the most important things you can do during your pregnancy (Bouchez, "Exercise During Pregnancy", Riley 25, Roizen and Oz 310, Sears and Sears 59). I know it seems like the perfect reason to sit back and relax but quite the contrary (Harms and Wick 43). Exercise can help decrease back pain, increase energy levels and minimize depression (*Patient Education: Exercise during pregnancy*, Dolan and Kelly 59-60, Harms and Wick 46, Riley 25, Roizen and Oz 157, Sears and Sears 61). It can also lower the risk of some pregnancy complications, such as hypertension, gestational diabetes, and thrombosis or blood clot (Dolan and Kelly 59, Harms and Wick 43, Riley 25, Sears and Sears 59-61). Exercise also causes an increase in the release of a natural pain reliever called endorphins (Dolan and Kelly 96, "Exercising During Pregnancy", Sears and Sears 61).

Exercise is good! If you were in tip-top physical shape before you conceived, then you have a head start. Now you need to continue training to better prep your body for the hours of labor and pushing that your body must endure for childbirth (Bouchez, Dolan and Kelly 60, "Exercising During Pregnancy", Harms and Wick 43, "Pregnancy and Exercise", Sears and Sears 59-61.) Exercise helps strengthen your muscles and gives you stamina to push out the beautiful child you have been carrying and growing in your womb (Dolan and Kelly 60, Harms and Wick 43, Riley 25, Sears and Sears 61). This is such a precious gift to women. It's amazing to see and feel just how marvelous a woman's body is and what it can do. By simply continuing your workouts, you help shorten your recovery time after delivery ("Exercising During Pregnancy", Harms and Wick 43).



Jess holding baby Jonathan.

I always found joy and encouragement in the thought that what I do now will greatly help me in the future. I encourage all women to be active, even if there are obstacles in your way, find something to keep you active even if that activity is working your brain. Reading is a wonderful way to keep the mind active when your body cannot be. The brain is a muscle too, you know. I am a lifelong learner of physical strength and abilities. I hope you feel the same way.

Is it okay to train while pregnant?

Yes! Yes! Yes! If you have had prior experience with kettlebells before getting pregnant, I say train (Dolan and Kelly 64, 248, Harms and Wick 44, Lurie 254, Riley 25, Sears and Sears 59-63). If you are totally new to exercise, I would recommend seeing a certified kettlebell trainer to ensure proper form and posture when doing your lifts. It is necessary that you get the basics down before moving forward. As your body grows throughout your pregnancy you will need to adjust your form to lift properly.



Attending Dan's kettlebell class at Honeygo Park. This was during my second pregnancy.

Even if you are physically active, if this is your first time trying kettlebells find a good qualified instructor or personal trainer to help you with proper form (Dolan and Kelly 64-65). That can also be a good way to keep yourself motivated. If someone holds you accountable to exercise throughout your pregnancy, you are more likely to continue your workouts.

As always use caution and always listen to your body (Bouchez, Harms and Wick 43-44, Riley 262, Sears and Sears 63). Be aware of how you are feeling, decrease weight or reps if it feels like it's too much (Dolan and Kelly 64, Harms and Wick 44, Riley 25). When a heavier kettlebell was getting too much for me to lift, I would lower the weight and increase my reps. If at any time something hurts or does not feel right; stop (Harms and Wick 44).

As with all training and exercise be smart. Talk to your doctor about your exercising (Bouchez, Harms and Wick 44, Lurie 252, *Patient Education: Exercise during pregnancy*, Roizen and Oz 332, Riley 25, Sears and Sears 61). Due to all the physiological changes that will be taking place in your body, you will need to adjust your lifts and swings to accommodate your belly. Over the course of your pregnancy your center of gravity changes (Dolan and Kelly 64, "Exercising During Pregnancy", Sears and Sears 65-68, "Staying Healthy During Pregnancy"). Due to this change, you will need to adjust your posture during some exercises. Getting the help of a trainer is a great way to help you keep proper forms and lift safely (Dolan and Kelly 64-65).

I was lucky to have a certified kettlebell instructor living with me. Dan helped me figure out how to properly adjust my lifts to get around my belly bump. He also showed me some new exercises. Like any good trainer, he would hold me accountable for keeping up on my workouts. He was my biggest supporter and gave me lots of encouragement, even when I was just plain tired. Got to love him.

Listen to your body

Now that you are pregnant your goals for exercising and staying strong are different than when you are not pregnant. You do not want to over exert yourself, try any new challenging lifts or set personal records (Bouchez). After your pregnancy is the perfect time for that stuff. You never want to work out to the point of dyspnea (shortness of breath) or exhaustion (Harms and Wick 44, "Pregnancy Exercise Guidelines").

Exercise causes an increase in blood flow to whatever area is being worked (Riley 261). Keep in mind, this means that blood flow will decrease to other parts of your body (Sears and Sears 62). Therefore, it is important to not over do it, your baby also needs adequate blood flow (*Patient Education: Exercise during pregnancy*, Sears and Sears 62).

What level of intensity should you work out at? Well, that depends on you. First, how far along are you? And second, how are you feeling? Be careful when you answer the second question. We all know pregnant women are tired, and for good reason it takes a lot of work growing another human being. In all honesty, though, the last 3 months are the most difficult to work out because your belly is getting in the way. And all that extra weight puts pressure on your lungs and pelvic girdle ("Exercising During Pregnancy"). Just remember listen to your body and change your intensity based on how you feel (Dolan and Kelly 68, Harms and Wick 44, "Pregnancy Exercise Guidelines", Riley 25). If you put forth the effort now, you will thank yourself later.

Benefits of exercising

Regular exercise during pregnancy shows definite health benefits to you and your baby (Dolan and Kelly 59, Harms and Wick 43-44, Riley 25, Roizen and Oz 157). Physical activity helps build strong bones and strengthens muscles (Dolan and Kelly 60, Harms and Wick 43).

Maintaining your physical endurance can help with not only the birthing process but taking care of your baby afterwards (Dolan and Kelly 60, "Exercising During Pregnancy", Harms and Wick 43, Riley 25). Once you get that little one home you will need your strength to pick up, hold and carry the baby around. Not to mention, toting around the car seat carrier. That thing feels like two ton of bricks, and the weight only increases as the baby gets bigger.

Even though you're feeling tired, exercise can be the cure to increasing your energy level and lighting your mood ("Exercising During Pregnancy", Harms and Wick 43, Riley 26, "Staying Healthy During Pregnancy"). Believe it or not exercise can also help decrease your morning sickness (Riley 26). FYI- it's called morning sickness but it can happen anytime of the day.

I know how hard it is to get in a workout when you already have one (or more) children to look after, but just think of the benefits that will follow. That pre-pregnancy body can be yours if you put in the time and energy now. Find your motivation and stick to it. All you need is 30 minutes a day for at least 3 days a week or more (Dolan and Kelly 60-61, Harms and Wick 43, *Patient Education: Exercise during pregnancy*, "Pregnancy and Exercise", Riley 25, Sears and Sears 62-63, "Staying Healthy During Pregnancy").

The benefits of exercise:

- Shorter laboring period, and healthier pregnancy outcomes.
- Quicker results when trying to get back to your pre-pregnancy weight.
- Helps you feel more energetic: your brain releases a natural chemical called endorphins.
- Improves muscle strength which helps improve posture & relieves backaches.
- Helps reduce and manage stress & anxiety to help you sleep better.
- Increases peristaltic movements in the intestines which can help with constipation.
- Increases your endurance, getting you ready for labor.
- Maintain your pregnancy weight.
- Reduce the risk of gestational diabetes.
- Help with mood swings.

(Bouchez, Dolan and Kelly 59-60, Harms and Wick 43-44, "Exercising During Pregnancy", *Patient Education: Exercise during pregnancy*,

"Pregnancy and Exercise", "Pregnancy and exercise: Baby, let's move", Riley 25, "Staying Healthy During Pregnancy", Wang & Apgar)

Keeping up with exercising will help maintain your muscle mass and cardiovascular endurance. You may have some minor losses but it will be easier for your body to remember and recognize endurance levels and muscle tone post-delivery. Making it easier for your body to get back to the same physical activity prior to pregnancy (Dolan and Kelly 60, Harms and Wick 33).



<http://bibliotheque.academie-medecine.fr/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Gravure-de-J.F.-Gautier-dAgoty-208x300.jpg>

Caution: Let's be safe

Please talk with your healthcare provider first before beginning any type of exercise program (Bouchez, "Pregnancy and Exercise", Riley 25, Roizen and Oz 332, "Staying Healthy During Pregnancy"). Keep in mind though that most doctors are not familiar with kettlebells, and many are not very knowledgeable about exercise. With that in mind, I would encourage you to have an open line of communication with your doctor about your exercise regimen. You never know, they might learn from you and share your experiences with other patients.

Exercise may not be recommended for some women with pre-existing medical problems such as asthma, hypertension and heart disease (Harms and Wick 44, "Pregnancy and exercise: Baby, let's move",

"Pregnancy and Exercise", Riley 25, Wang and Apgar 5). There are also some pregnancy-related conditions, such as low placenta, premature rupture of membranes, recurrent miscarriage and history of preterm labor, in which exercise may be harmful (Dolan and Kelly 61, "Pregnancy and Exercise", Riley 25, Wang and Apgar 5). Again, please consult with your doctor or midwife on what is best for you based on your specific past medical history.

As you continue through your pregnancy with all your prenatal care, always talk to your doctor about any concerns you might have about your exercise program. Your doctor may have a specific program you should be following. This may be more in depth and detailed in ranges of heart rate, hydration and nutrition while exercising and pregnant. Keep the lines of communication open.

If you have any of the symptoms listed below you should talk to your doctor about what happened. Then let your doctor better inform you on whether you should continue with an exercise program.

Warning signs for you to stop exercising and contact your health care provider:

- spotting or vaginal bleeding
- fluid leaking from the vagina
- decreased fetal movement
- uterine contractions
- abdominal or pelvic pains
- muscle weakness or difficulty walking
- swelling of the face, hands, ankles or calf pain
- headache
- chest pain
- increased shortness of breath
- feeling nauseated, dizziness, faint or lightheaded
- notice of any irregular heartbeat

(Bouchez, Dolan and Kelly 61-67, "Exercise During Pregnancy", *Patient Education: Exercise during pregnancy*, "Pregnancy and Exercise", "Pregnancy and exercise: Baby, let's move", Roizen and Oz 332, Sears and Sears 63, Wang and Apgar 4-5)

As with any workout, if you're feeling extra tired, weak or sore be sure to modify your workout or skip it (Dolan and Kelly 68, Riley 26).

Emphasizing again to listen to your body. Days when I'm feeling like this I usually try to do a light cardiovascular workout, like walking or using the stationary bike. Another modification to think of is your time. Instead of a 40-minute workout you could just do a 15 minute one. Just something to consider. Anything is better than nothing but if your body needs a rest, take it (Riley 262)!

Sometimes your body needs a 3- to 10-day rest period, just to re-coop. Our bodies are already doing so much without us even trying. Developing and creating a tiny little person inside you is a huge task your body undergoes. Rest can be most beneficial for your body.

When performing exercises, remember to avoid any exercise that involves laying on your back during the second and third trimester (Bouchez, Dolan and Kelly 67, "Exercising During Pregnancy", Harms and Wick 45, *Patient Education: Exercise during pregnancy*, "Pregnancy Exercise Guidelines", Sears and Sears 65). The major blood vessels in your abdomen could be compressed by your enlarged uterus causing a decrease in blood flow to your baby (Dolan and Kelly 67, Sears and Sears 65).

Stretching meet relaxin

Throughout your pregnancy, you will find your body becoming more and more flexible. This is due to the release of the hormone *relaxin* early in pregnancy (Bouchez, "Staying Healthy During Pregnancy", Sears and Sears 64). Relaxin relaxes the body's joints, ligaments and musculature causing hyper-flexibility during your pregnancy and a few months post-delivery (Roizen and Oz 192-95, 206). This hormone is released to help soften the cervix and relax the pelvic ligaments in natural preparation for delivery (Sears and Sears 64, "Staying Healthy During Pregnancy"). Due to your new-found flexibility, please be aware of your body's limits and do not over stretch ("Staying Healthy During Pregnancy").

When performing any exercise or stretching, try to stay in "your pre-pregnancy range of motion" (Bouchez). Especially be aware when doing exercises such as squats or lunges, you do not want to extend passed the 90-degree angle (Bouchez). Another way to avoid injury is to stay away from jerky or bouncy movements ("Exercising During Pregnancy", Roizen and Oz 332, Sears and Sears 64-65). If done correct, a little stretching every day can help strengthen your muscles. Stretching helps your joints and ligaments grow stronger and firmer.

Stretching

Stretching helps relieve tension that builds up from our day to day routines. Performing these stretches on a regular basis can help maintain flexibility, increase muscle tone and improve posture. Some yoga stretches are great for pregnant women, just keep in mind that relaxin is now in your system so you want to stay within your pre-pregnancy limits. There are several yoga poses that can help with getting your mind and your body ready for labor. There are also some good pregnancy yoga videos available.

Try to start your workout and end your workout with some light stretching (Harms and Wick 45). If you are an office worker it is especially good to do some stretching while at your desk. Try simple flexion and extension of your feet or raising your shoulder up towards your ears then pressing them down. For all those who work, try utilizing your breaks with short walks to help keep the blood circulating.

Neck circles:

1. Relax neck and shoulders, hands by your sides.
2. Drop head forward, chin to chest.
3. Slowly rotate your head to your left shoulder, around to the back, then over to the right shoulder, all the way around back to chest.
4. Repeat 3 times slowly.





Neck flexion and extension:

1. Relax neck and shoulders.
2. Drop head forward, chin to chest.
3. Move head back, chin up, looking up. (Make sure you do not over extend your neck too far back, stay at a comfortable range.)
4. Now slowly reverse direction, moving your head forward chin to chest.
5. Repeat 3 times slowly.



Shoulder circles:

1. Stand with feet shoulder width apart, arms relaxed at side and keep your traps relaxed.
2. Bring your shoulders forward then move them upwards towards your ears, continue towards your back then bring them back to starting point.

3. Do 3 shoulder circles, then reverse direction and do 3 more.



Shoulder and Arm stretch:

1. Lift your arms straight up over your head, hands interlocking or not and stretch up, as if pushing something into the sky. Hold stretch for five to ten seconds. Repeat 1-3 times slowly. (Riley 177)



Chest and Arm stretch:

1. Clasp your hands behind your back.
2. Lift your arms up as high as you can, keep hands clasped. Hold a few seconds and then relax. Hold stretch for five to ten seconds. Repeat 1-3 times slowly. (Riley 250)



Hip circles:

1. Stand hips width apart, hands on hips
2. Rotate hips to left side then continue around in a circle to the back, then to the right side and around to the front. Continuing in a circle about 3 times. Then reverse, go in the opposite direction and do 3 times





Lunge stretch:

1. Stand with feet shoulder width apart.
2. With your left foot step forward about 2 feet in front of the right, keeping toes pointed in the same direction.
3. Lean forward, supporting your weight on the forward thigh. Place hands on your forward thigh for added support.
4. Come back to standing and bring your left foot back to mid-line.
5. Repeat stretch with the other side, do 3 stretches on each side.



Ankle circles:

1. Sit in a chair or on the floor with your legs extended.
2. Make circles by rotating your feet and ankles. Try one foot at a time or both at the same time.
3. Complete 3 circles on each foot, do 3 more circles in the opposite direct as well.



Cat stretch for lower back:

1. Get down on the floor, supporting your body on your hands and knees. Hands shoulder width apart and knees should be about hips width apart.
2. Push your back up towards the ceiling, like a cat arching its back.
3. Continue in this arch position, hold for about 15 seconds. You should feel a gentle stretch in your back.
4. Return to the starting position; relaxed back.
5. Repeat 5-10 times. (Harms and Wick 167, Riley 175)



The next two stretches described are called tailors stretches. They are exercises that help strengthen and stretch the low back, pelvic, hip and inner thigh muscles. These two stretches can be done on the floor or in a bed, where ever is more comfortable.

Tailors sit

1. Sit on the floor with the knees bent and the bottoms of your feet together. Like a diamond shape.
2. Keep your back straight, lightly grasp ankles with hands and place forearms on the inside of the knee. On a deep inhale lean forward slightly, keeping your head and eyes looking forward. Now press your arms against your thighs while contracting the thighs up, creating a counter pressure.
3. Then exhale deeply and relax thighs and arms.
4. Keeping the position, inhale and lean in slightly deeper. Contract the thighs against the arms and hold, then exhale deeply and relax. Repeat this step again going a little deeper on the inhale and hold. Exhale and relax.
5. With a big inhale and straight spine come up to sitting.
6. Take a couple deep breaths and repeat 3-10 times, as long as you are comfortable. (This stretch is one of my favorites. It helps tighten the pelvic floor muscles and stretches the hips and thighs.)



Tailor press

1. Sit on the floor with your knees bent and bring the bottoms of your feet together. Like a diamond shape.
2. Grasp your ankles and gently draw them as close to your body as you can comfortably.
3. Place your hands under your knees.
4. On a long inhale, press your knees towards the floor and press your hands up against your knees, producing counter-pressure. Hold resistance while slowly counting to three. Exhale and relax.
5. Repeat 3-10 times, as long as you are comfortable.



Kegel exercises

Do your Kegel exercises! This is a must. Kegel exercises help strengthen all the muscles on the pelvic floor (“Exercise During Pregnancy”, Harms and Wick 181, Lurie 270, Riley 100-101, Roizen and Oz 216). The bladder, uterus, vagina and intestines are all supported by your pelvic floor muscles (Dolan and Kelly 65, Harms and Wick 181, Riley 100). The pressure of the growing uterus throughout pregnancy puts stress on the pelvic floor causing weakness and stretching (“Exercise During Pregnancy”, Lurie 270, Riley 100, Sears and Sears 68-69). This can lead to urinary incontinence, something many women suffer from after giving birth (Harms and Wick 181, Riley 100, Roizen and Oz 216, Sears and Sears 68-69). Strengthening your pelvic floor can help control your bladder and prevent leakage (Dolan and Kelly 65, Harms and Wick 181, Riley 100, Roizen and Oz 216, Sears and Sears 68-69).

By developing these muscles, you can better prepare your body for pushing during active labor and assist your body with healing after delivery (Dolan and Kelly 65, Harms and Wick 181, "Pregnancy and Exercise", Riley 100, Roizen and Oz 216, 331, Sears and Sears 68-70). Do anything you can now to help you later during your recovery process. What I learned is you must first have a strong pelvic floor before strengthening your abdominal muscles (Roizen and Oz 331). Those base muscles help provide stability to your core.

How to activate and work your Kegels:

Kegels involve contracting and releasing the pelvic floor muscles, similarly to stopping the flow of urination (Harms and Wick 181, Riley 101, Roizen and Oz 216, Sears and Sears 69). If you have trouble figuring out where or what your pelvic floor muscles feel like to contract try this; next time you're in the bathroom, urinate then contract (or try and stop during) midstream (Dolan and Kelly 65, Harms and Wick 181, Sears and Sears 69). And congratulations, you have just located your Kegel muscles. Try doing Kegels many times throughout your day (Riley 101). You can do these exercises quickly or tighten and hold for a length of time. Either way or both ways is better than not at all. Go ahead try it now.

The best thing about Kegel exercises is that they are very simple, painless and can be done anywhere and anytime (Riley 101). Try to get into a routine with contracting these muscles. If you have trouble remembering, try leaving yourself a note on the car dash or at your work desk. Kegel

exercises will be most beneficial post pregnancy to help you with a quicker recovery (Dolan and Kelly 65, Sears and Sears 68-70).

Abdominal exercises

Strengthening your abdominal muscles and your core can help you throughout your pregnancy to reduce low back pain. Developing any kind of strength will also better prepare you for the labor and delivery process (Bouchez, Harms and Wick 43, Roizen and Oz 310).

When doing, abdominal exercises be careful not to over strain. Crunches and sit-ups are okay in the first trimester and only if you are not straining (Dolan and Kelly 68). To continue doing your sit-up after your 1st trimester try them on an incline bench or an exercise ball. You should also remember to continuously be breathing during these exercises, you should never hold your breath. After your first trimester, you should avoid any exercise that requires you to lay on your back (Bouchez, Dolan and Kelly 67, "Exercise During Pregnancy"). Listed below are some abdominal exercises to try.

Abdominal Contractions:

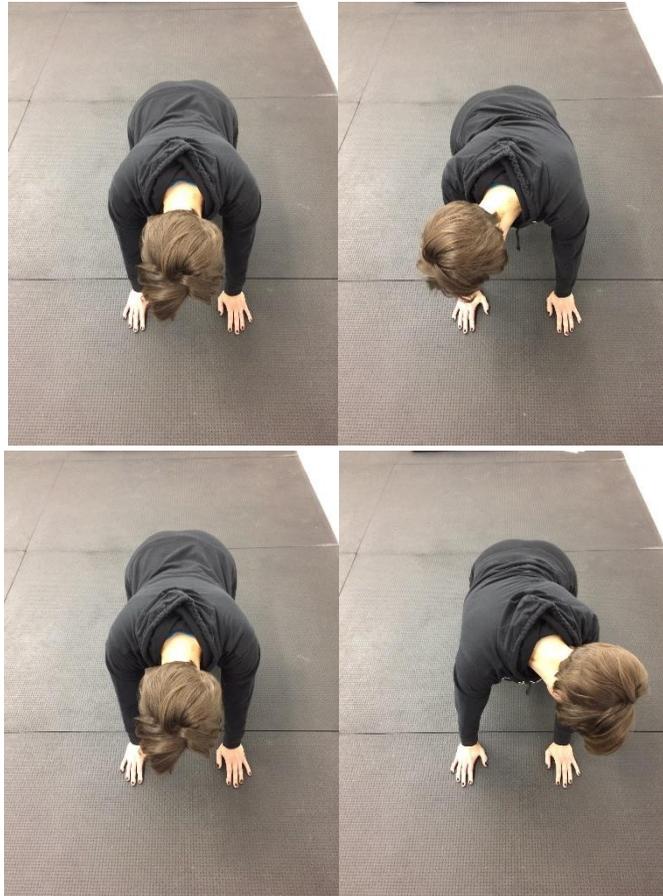
1. Lay on the floor with pillows supporting your back or an exercise ball (stay with 45-90-degree angle) to keep your back aligned. Or be in a seated position, whatever is more comfortable.
2. Place your hands on your stomach and with a deep inhale, fully fill your chest and abdomen.
3. Now contract the abdominal wall and slowly through pursed lips exhale completely. (Pursed lips breathing is breathing in through the nose and out through the mouth, lips pursed just like blowing out candles.)
4. Repeat 3-5 times slowly.

Pelvic Rocking:

1. Get on the floor on your hands and knees.
2. Now tuck your pelvis under by contracting the inner abdominal muscles. Be careful to avoid any arching of your back.
3. Hold this position for 3-5 seconds then relax
4. Repeat 3-10 times.

Side Bending:

1. Get on the floor on your hands and knees.
2. Now move your left shoulder and your left hip towards each other, like a crunch or side twist, activating your oblique muscles.
3. Return to starting position, and repeat on the right side.
4. Alternating sides; do about 3-10 times on each side.



Dress attire

To help prevent falls be aware of your center of gravity and exercise on flat even surfaces (Sears and Sears 65-68). As your center of gravity changes, your balance will be affected (Dolan and Kelly 64, 248, *Patient Education: Exercise during pregnancy*, Sears and Sears 65). Some women may start to feel clumsy; I know I was one of those women who couldn't wear heels later in pregnancy. Be sure to dress comfortable (Harms and Wick 280, Lurie 254, "Pregnancy and Exercise", Riley 201). Wear supportive footwear or none, and a good supportive bra (Dolan and Kelly 67, Harms and Wick 280, "Pregnancy and Exercise", Riley 201, Roizen and Oz 332, Sears and Sears 62). Those puppies are only going to get bigger.

Barefoot training is totally appropriate with kettlebells. I train both ways. Barefoot training helps strengthen your lower body and helps improve balance as well. With the added weight, later in pregnancy, along with the presence of relaxin, an athletic shoe with good arch support can help ease any foot discomfort ("Pregnancy Exercise Guidelines", Sears and Sears 201-202). Try to avoid exercising in extreme heat to avoid overheating and dehydration (Dolan and Kelly 66, Sears and Sears 64-66).

If you are exercising outdoors, be sure to plan for times of the day that are cooler (Dolan and Kelly 66, "Exercising During Pregnancy", Sears and Sears 64). Be sure to wear layers of clothes that can easily be removed if you begin to overheat (Dolan and Kelly 66). If you are exercising indoors, it's always a good idea to have a fan nearby (Dolan and Kelly 66).

Section 2 – Kettlebells and Calories

What is a kettlebell?

A kettlebell is a free weight made of cast iron or steel ("Kettlebells USA®"). It is round like a cannonball with a flat base and a handle on top ("History of the Kettlebell", "Kettlebells USA®"). They come in a variety of sizes ranging from 3 pounds to 212 pounds. Typically, they are measured in kilograms. 1kg is equal to 2.2 pounds.

History of kettlebells

Kettlebells have been around for centuries (Wesley). They were first documented in the Russian dictionary in 1704 ("History of the Kettlebell", "Kettlebells USA®", Wesley). *Girya* is the Russian word for kettlebell ("History of the Kettlebell", Wesley). Those who lifted kettlebells were known as "gireviks" or "kettlebell man" ("History of the Kettlebell", Tsatsouline XIV). Initially, kettlebells were used in the marketplace as counterweights on scales to help measure goods sold ("Kettlebells USA®", Sanchez, Wesley).

Marketers began lifting kettlebells for entertainment at fairs and festivals (Wesley). Kettlebells were later used in weightlifting and to build physical strength ("History of the Kettlebell", Wesley).

Timeline

1885 – Dr. Vladislav Krayevskiy, founder of the modern fitness gym, introduced kettlebells to Russian athletes ("Kettlebells USA®", Wesley).

1913 - Kettlebells were featured in *Hercules* a popular fitness magazine ("History of the Kettlebell").

Early 1900's - strongmen and circus performers around the world trained with kettlebells (Sanchez).

1948 - The first kettlebell competition was held with 55 athletes competing (Sanchez).

1974 - *Girevoy Sport* (GS) was formally declared the ethnic sport of Russia ("Kettlebells USA®", Sanchez, Wesley).

1985 - A committee was created for the sport of kettlebell lifting. In Russia, the first National Championship was held ("History of the Kettlebell", Wesley).

1992 - "The European Union of Weightball Lifting was created and the first

European championship was” held. (Sanchez).

1998 - First long cycle Championship was held (Sanchez).

2001 - “Pavel Tsatsouline, former Soviet Special forces physical training instructor” introduced kettlebells along with John Du Cane, publishing the first Kettlebell book in America (Wesley). 2002 - Kettlebells got into the Rolling Stones magazine. (Tsatsouline XX, Wesley).

The Russian military Armed Forces were the first to train their soldiers with kettlebells ("History of the Kettlebell", Sanchez, Wesley). Later, kettlebells were added to other military forces such as the United States Army and Navy ("History of the Kettlebell").

Why they are becoming so popular?

Kettlebells took off in popularity quickly after being introduced both in early Russia and now currently in the United States ("History of the Kettlebell", Wesley). Anyone who has tried kettlebells knows how great of a workout you can achieve if you challenge yourself.

Kettlebells offer an overall body strengthening and endurance workout. Kettlebells focus on your cardiovascular fitness, bone and joint health along with helping you increase your mobility and flexibility. They are the most effective way to both lose weight and build muscle, resulting in that sexy, healthier, leaner “body you've always wanted” ("History of the Kettlebell", "Kettlebells USA®”).

Kettlebells are a unique tool, cheap and virtually indestructible ("History of the Kettlebell", Sanchez). You can take them anywhere. As moms, we don't get a lot of time for ourselves, but with kettlebells in the house you can achieve great strength and muscle building with maximum results in minimal time ("History of the Kettlebell").

With all these great health benefits, it's no question why kettlebells have become so popular. Oh, and they look cool too.

What makes them a great tool for pregnant women and new mothers?

Kettlebells are the best tool for all women. Even if you only have a few minutes, in that small amount of time you can get in a great workout (Lurie 269-270). They are convenient and you can use them anywhere. You

can exercise outside, inside or take them on the road, whether on vacation or a business trip (hotel room); wherever. You don't need a lot of storage space to keep them either.



Breanna happy to watch mom lift kettlebells.

Nowadays everyone is so busy, especially new moms. Kettlebells are the perfect way to stay physically fit. In a short period of time you can get the most intense workout (Lurie 269-270). There are many different training methods you can use, such as circuit training and ladder training. All you need is only one tool, your kettlebell. There are so many different exercises, you will never get bored.

The best thing about kettlebells is that anyone can use them, young, old, short, tall or pregnant. Most fitness machines are made for the average person, and most of us are not average size, therefore, we are not fit for these machines. We are all made different, and kettlebells offer that perfect lift that suits your shape body. Perfect for everyone. You do not need to be physically fit either before using them. Kettlebells are a great tool to help with weight loss goals, because kettlebells incorporate strength training along with cardiovascular training (Lurie 253).

As a busy new mom, you will find kettlebell training will make performing your everyday tasks much simpler. Many new mom tasks

include lifting, carrying and holding our new babies, and diaper bags. Just think, eventually your baby will be growing and advancing to the next stage. As a toddler, their weight only increases and now they are also on the move. Lifting kettlebells can help you keep your energy levels high so you can keep up with your growing child and their increasing weight. Other things that we don't think about is grocery shopping. Carrying the grocery bags from the store to the car then from the car to the house. What a task, right? Let's talk about the laundry. Another thing we moms do is carry those heavy laundry baskets up-and-down the steps. Lifting kettlebells can help you do these tasks with great ease. Training can also help decrease low back pain, which is common after childbirth.

The meat and potatoes of kettlebell training

1. Increases your mental focus - You must focus on the exercise at hand, tighten and squeeze different parts of your body. This keeps your mind active and your body tight, focusing on each muscle that's being used.
2. You bulk up - This is a myth. You will get a shapelier chiseled look, tone and fit. Just look at celebrities that use kettlebells, such as Madonna, Katherine Heigl and Jessica Alba to name a few.
3. Easy to learn - With the help of a certified kettlebell instructor, you will be swinging kettlebells in the luxury of your own home in no time.
4. Help improve posture - After the added weight of your pregnancy your body needs to relearn proper posture. Kettlebells help strengthen body posture and core strength.
5. Help to correct any imbalances - Your body may be weaker on one side. Kettlebells will reveal this and help you correct the imbalance.
6. Better coordination - Kettlebells make you use your body unit, everything working together. Add this along with the repetitive movements and watch as your coordination greatly increases.



June 2016, do I look bulky?

Monitor your heartrate

Monitor your workout by tracking your heart rate and breathing (Sears and Sears 63). Your maximum heart rate will change as your pregnancy progresses. When I first sat down to do my research in 2006, what I read about exercise and pregnancy stated that your heart rate should only go as high as 130-140 bpm (beats per minute) (Dolan and Kelly 248, Sears and Sears 63, "Pregnancy and Exercise"). That was the general concept from the olden days (Bouchez). More recent evidence states that you should be your own judge (Bouchez). Go by how you feel during your workout (Bouchez, Riley 261-262). Pay attention to your body, and modify your workout by listening and being in tune with your body (Riley 261-262).

Depending on how active you were pre-pregnancy will influence how high or low you will want to keep your heart rate (Dolan and Kelly 248, Sears and Sears 63). If you have been exercising for a while, your body is comfortable and used to an increase in your heart rate. Pre-pregnancy exercisers should feel more comfortable exercising at a higher heart rate level during pregnancy (Sears and Sears 63). If you just started working out, you will probably feel more comfortable keeping your heart rate on the lower side (Sears and Sears 63). Another way to know if your heart rate is at an acceptable level is, if you can talk normally while exercising (Dolan and Kelly 64-67, "Exercising During Pregnancy", "Pregnancy and Exercise",

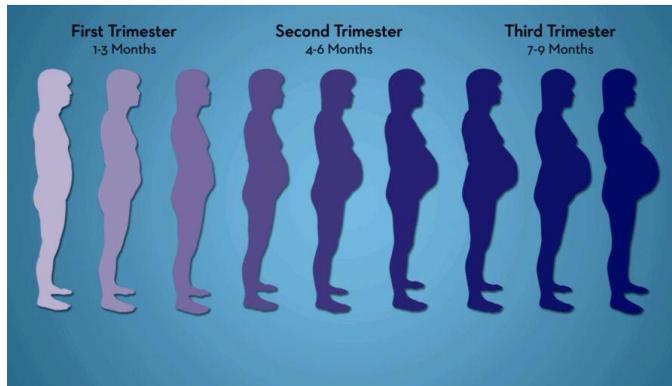
Riley 26, Sears and Sears 63). Or try singing the alphabet or a chorus from your favorite song; if you can make it through with ease then great (Riley

26). If your speech is pressured or you simply cannot complete the song, then you should decrease your intensity and catch your breath (Dolan and Kelly 64, Riley 26, Roizen and Oz 332).

In my personal experience, early on in pregnancy I would reach 160 bpm. Towards the end, my heart rate goal was more like 120 bpm, gradually lowering my heart rate as I got closer to my due date. I based my finding on how I felt and not allowing myself to get to the point of breathlessness. With about a 50% increase in blood volume pumping around my body and the extra 25-30lbs, I was easily out of breath (Dolan and Kelly 35). Typically, around 8-9 months I stopped lifting kettlebells and just walked.

Example of my heart rates throughout pregnancy:

- 1st trimester - 140-160's, I felt great. If talking to someone, I would get out of breath but not to the point of breathlessness. Honestly, I didn't hold lengthy conversations with other people. However, because I was monitoring my heart rate, if I noticed it getting higher than 160 I would back off a bit and get it back down to under 160. The trend being, in the beginning of the first trimester my heart rate averaged 150-160, ending the trimester with my heart rate lower towards 140-150's.
- 2nd trimester - 130-150's, felt good but started getting more winded mainly towards the end of the trimester. The trend was, in the beginning of the second trimester my heart rate averaged 140-150, and towards the end of this trimester lowering the heart rate to 130-140.
- 3rd trimester - 120-140's, felt large and easily out of breath. Towards the eighth and ninth month I was more comfortable with my heart rate averaging between 120-130's.



http://images.parents.mdpcdn.com/sites/parents.com/files/styles/scale_1500_1500/public/images/tvOHJoNDE6dm52nLdlemPfJvR1y7nG6K.jpg

The best advice I can give is to know your heart rate and how your body responds. Figure out what is a good balance for you and your baby and always remember to breathe. Just remember “you know your body better than anyone else” (Dolan and Kelly 68). Trust your gut instinct and believe in yourself.

If you don't have a heart rate monitor, no problem. Simply locate your pulse, feel it and count. You will need a clock (preferably one with a second hand) or a timer. The normal adult pulse is 60 to 100 bpm.

It is easier to feel the pulse in arteries that come close to the skin. Arteries are the vessels that carry blood from the heart to various parts of your body. There are several arteries in your body that can be used to feel a pulse. The most common arteries used for checking your pulse are listed and explained below.

- **Radial.** This artery is located on the inside of the wrist, just under the thumb. Place your index finger and middle finger over your radial artery and begin counting. Begin to count the number of beats for 15 seconds. Take that number and multiply by 4. This will give you your heart beats per minute.

Carotid. This artery is found on the neck between the windpipe and neck muscle. Using your index finger and middle finger feel for your pulse over your carotid artery. Once you feel your pulse, begin counting the beats for 15 seconds. Take that number and multiply by 4. This will give you your heartbeat per minute ("Fitness").

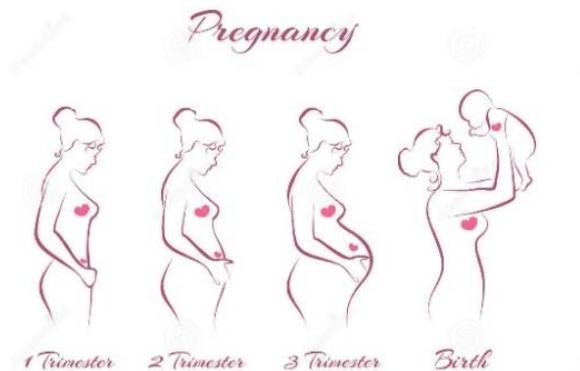
(FYI - Never use your thumb to count a pulse, as your thumb has a pulse in it and will interfere.)

What size kettlebells to use?

Lifting the proper weight is important. I recommend using a weight that feels good to you, not too heavy. As you progress through your pregnancy, the weights you use will change based on your strength and which exercise you are choosing to do. As your belly grows, you will need to adjust the weights used and the number of sets and reps as well. Key things to remember are to not hold your breath during a lift and no straining or grunting during your lifts (Dolan and Kelly 64-67, Roizen and Oz 332). Save that kind of energy for after delivery, postpartum when you're trying to lose those extra pounds.

I typically used the same size kettlebell I was working with before I found out I was pregnant during the first trimester. However, for some exercises I decreased the weights shortly after I found out I was pregnant. During the second trimester, I started to decrease my weights in all lifts. For example, using the 16kg kettlebell for swings, I decrease to the 12kg. I would gage my weights on two main things, how I was breathing and any pain or achiness in my back. (FYI- I had a back injury right before I conceived my first child, so my lower back tends to get sore from time to time.) Also, if lifting heavier caused too much straining in my abdominal muscles, I would try to decrease my weights or I just stopped doing those lifts all together.

I made a list of most of the exercises I did throughout my pregnancies. I listed the size kettlebell used and categorized them in time frames. See chart on next page.



<https://thumbs.dreamstime.com/z/pregnancy-stages-trimesters-birth-pregnant-woman-baby-white-background-52098692.jpg>

Exercises and kettlebells used:

Exercise	Pre-pregnancy	1st trimester	2nd trimester	3rd trimester	Postpartum
2 arm swings	24kg	16kg	12kg	switched to 1-arm swings due to baby belly 8kg	12kg
1 arm swings	16kg	12kg	12kg	8kg	8kg
press	16kg	16kg	12kg	8kg	8kg
row	16kg	16kg	12kg	8kg	8kg
lung	16kg x 2	12kg x 2	8kg x 2	8kg x 2	8kg x 2
squat	16kg	16kg	12kg	12kg	12kg
deadlift	48kg	16kg	12kg	8kg	12kg
single leg dead lift	32kg	16kg	12kg	12kg	8kg
clean	16kg	16kg	12kg	12kg	12kg
snatch	16kg	12kg	8kg	stopped	8kg
jerks	12kg	12kg	8kg	stopped	12kg
windmill	12kg	12kg	8kg	8kg	8kg

*Postpartum lifts usually started out with lighter weights, then increased quickly if no pain was present. For example, if I started with an 8kg, I may have used this weight for 2-3 workouts then increased to the 12kg. You must remember to gage your kettlebell size on how your body feels after delivery. No one is the same, we all have different issues, if any, after giving birth. Take it slow at first, feel how your body responds to each exercise then increase in weight and speed when you are ready. More information in the postpartum chapter.

Other types of exercises and tools to try

Keep yourself active, be creative and change it up. This should help you to not get bored with exercise in general. Don't get me wrong, I love lifting kettlebells but every now and then I change my routine. I do lots of fun activities like hula hooping, jump roping and jogging. The best thing about some of these activities is your kids can join in the fun, when old enough.



Breanna age 4, hula hooping.

When I had access to a stationary bike, elliptical and treadmill I would use these for cardio. During pregnancy, I tried water aerobics and pregnancy yoga. I also walked a lot! Doing something active is more beneficial than being sedentary.

Journaling

Growing up I was always involved in sports, mainly softball and soccer. In high school, I got involved in volleyball as well. I got my first gym membership at the age of 16 and my parents would take me with them. This was something fun we got to do together. They also were very supportive and encouraging to me throughout my youth. They would come to all my games and even practices. It wasn't till the age of 19 that I started to get serious about exercising. This is when I began my workout journals, documenting everything I did. I figured it would be a way to hold myself

accountable and see how long I could keep it up. It became a habit for me and now it's part of who I am. Because this is now ingrained in me, I make time to work out regardless of kids and busy schedules. Exercise makes me feel good!

If you don't already, I highly recommend writing down all your workouts. It is the best way to keep track of your progress and know what weights you are using, how many reps/sets you did and what your heart rate was (Riley 141). As you may have experienced already, with pregnancy comes absentmindedness. It's nice to recall something you did weeks ago, or look for different lifts or workouts, something maybe you forgot about. I could simply go back in my journal and look. When I found out I was pregnant for the second time, I went back to my old journals and reviewed my old pregnancy workouts.

I would also use my workout journals to track how I felt both physically and mentally. You could say it was like my diary too. I would write about sonograms, doctor visits, etc. Furthermore, I found journaling to be a great motivator, helping me view my progress and encouraging me to keep on going. I would write down any activity that I did that burned calories, such as washing cars, cleaning house and gardening. Keeping such a detailed journal was good for when I went back over them. It showed me how I can be active in different ways and was encouraged to know I didn't just sit on the couch that day.

Don't wait any longer, start your journaling today. In the world of technology, I would not recommend keeping your journal on your phone. Too many distractions like texting, Facebook, or emailing. Be old school, get a pen and paper (rather notebook) and keep your journal that way. When working out, do not be preoccupied with taking phone calls, or updating social media statuses. You want to be focused on the task at hand, getting stronger. Plus, if you're not distracted by the world of technology, you will be able to complete your workout a lot faster. Be focused, not flighty.

Nutrition

Good proper nutrition and prenatal care is a must. Be sure you are keeping up with all your doctor visits and taking your prenatal vitamins (Riley 23). I always looked-for vitamins with 800-1000 micrograms of folic acid (folate) (Dolan and Kelly 11, 35, 214-215, "Pregnancy Nutrition: Eating Healthy While Pregnant", "Questions and Answers"). Getting adequate folic acid helps reduce the risk of miscarriage and spinal defects (Dolan and

Kelly 11, 35, 214-215, Harms and Wick 38, "Pregnancy Nutrition: Eating Healthy While Pregnant", "Questions and Answers", Riley 24, Roizen and Oz 37, 112, Sears and Sears 47, "Staying Healthy During Pregnancy"). To be on the safe side I would eat foods that naturally have folic acid in them, such as broccoli, spinach and lentils (Dolan and Kelly 35-38, 214-215, Harms and Wick 38, Riley 24). Talk with your healthcare provider about any additional vitamins or nutrients (like calcium or iron) you may need.

Eating healthy is a goal you should maintain throughout your pregnancy and the rest of your life. Now is the best time to eat foods that are good for you, to better assist in the healthy growth and development of your baby ("Pregnancy Nutrition: Eating Healthy While Pregnant"). I am a huge believer in eating healthy, I don't do diets. The American Academy of Family Physicians recommends that during the 1st and 2nd trimesters you need an increase of 150 calories per day and in the 3rd trimester increase to 300 calories (4). If you are exercising the demands are higher.

To help maintain a healthy pregnancy weight:

- 1st trimester - increase 150 calories per day, should only gain a few pounds during this trimester.
 - 2nd trimester - increase 150-300 calories per day, weight gain around 3-4 pounds per month.
 - 3rd trimester - increase 300 calories per day, weight gain 3-4 pounds per month.
-

(Harms and Wick 43, "Pregnancy and Exercise", "Pregnancy Nutrition: Eating Healthy While Pregnant", Roizen and Oz 66-67, "Staying Healthy During Pregnancy", Wang and Apgar)

*When looking at the extra calorie intake, keep in mind that a 6-oz. serving of yogurt is around 150 calories.

Great foods to eat during pregnancy. Helps to fill your belly and feel fuller longer:

- Eggs - 1 medium sized egg is about 70 calories.
- Avocados - 1 medium sized avocado is about 240 calories.
- Yogurt - 6 oz. is about 150 calories.
- Blueberries - raw 1 cup is about 80 calories.

- Oatmeal - ½ cup steel cut oats is about 150 calories.
1 cup cooked rolled oats is about 150 calories.
1 packet plain instant is about 100 calories.
- Dry cereal- Cheerios 1 cup is about 110 calories.
Special K 1 cup is about 120 calories.
Fiber One 1 cup is about 60 calories.
- Beans - pinto ½ cup is about 143 calories.
Black 1 cup is about 227 calories.
Kidney 1 cup is about 225 calories.
- Lentils - 1 cup is about 230 calories.
- Greens - green beans 1 cup is about 31 calories.
Green leaf lettuce shredded 1 cup is about 5 calories.
Broccoli steamed 1 cup is about 45 calories. Spinach steamed 1 cup is about 42 calories.
Kale raw chopped 1 cup is about 33 calories.
Collard greens 1 cup boiled and drained is about 50 calories.
- Nuts - mixed nuts 1 cup is about 813 calories.
- Peanut butter sandwich or crackers - (depends on brands & types, calories will vary) PB sandwich is about 344 calories.
PB & J sandwich is about 343 calories.
PB crackers x6 is about 190 calories.
- Cheese and crackers - (depends on brands and types, calories will vary)
Crackers x6 is about 120 calories & 1-ounce cheese is about 100 calories = 220 calories.

("Count Your Calories for a Healthier Lifestyle.")

When thinking about what to eat and not, or should I say when to eat and not, remember this... for women with average weight pre-pregnancy, total weight gain should be between 25-35 pounds. If having twins total weight gain between 37-54 pounds. Let's look at the weight break down.

Breakdown of weight gain

Baby: 6-8 pounds

Breasts: 1-3 pounds

Uterus: 2 pounds

Placenta: 1-1.5 pounds

Amniotic fluid: 2 pounds
Blood volume: 3-4 pounds
Fluid volume: 3-4 pounds
Fat stores: 6-8 pounds

(Dolan and Kelly 75, Harms and Wick 43, 108, Riley 61, Roizen and Oz 72, 416, Sears and Sears 51-52)

Most of your weight will be gained in the last trimester. So, be careful not to overeat in the first two trimesters. Especially, when sweets are available. This can be difficult when the holidays roll around. Don't deprive yourself of what you like, just be aware of the portion size that you are eating.

As your uterus grows larger, your stomach has less and less room for large meals. So, eating small frequent meals later in pregnancy will help with that uncomfortable bloated feeling. When you do however, have this bloating feeling, hot decaf tea is the best remedy.

I found it helpful to carry around healthy snacks while pregnant. This came in handy when I would suddenly get hungry and want something to eat immediately. I'm sure you have heard the word "hangry"? Well it's when you turn into an angry person because you are that hungry. This would happen to me very quickly. That is why I would keep a bag of mixed nuts in my car, and a protein bar or granola bar in my purse. And I wouldn't go anywhere without a bottle of water. This helped me stay away from the fast food places. A good way to stay on track with healthy weight gain is to avoid those greasy food joints. This is an effective way in general to stay on course with healthy eating. Even now I keep snacks in the car for everyone.

Water and Caffeine

Adequate hydration is a must. It is recommended that a person have eight to ten 8-ounce cups of water a day (Dolan and Kelly 49, Montgomery 41, "The Importance of Drinking Water", "Water: How much should you drink every day"). If you are pregnant and exercising you will need to increase to about ten to twelve 8-ounce cups per day, depending on the intensity of your workout (Dolan and Kelly 49, "Water: How much should you drink every day"). Do your best to reach the recommended amount of water each day. If you allow thirst to be your trigger, by then your body is already getting dehydrated (Roizen and Oz 332). A good indicator of your

hydration status is your urine color ("Water: How much should you drink every day"). If your urine is slightly yellow that means you are well hydrated ("The Importance of Drinking Water", "Water: How much should you drink every day"). If your urine is dark yellow or worse a dark yellow-brown color you need to drink more fluids and fast (Dolan and Kelly 87).

Keeping yourself well hydrated is a must especially when you are working out (Harms and Wick 44, "Pregnancy Exercise Guidelines", Riley 54). Try drinking two cups of water prior to exercising, drink at least one or two cups during your workout and one cup after your workout (Riley 54, Wang and Apgar). If you get tired of water, which happens, change it up. You can add a little flavor to your water by adding some vegetables, fruits or herbs (Dolan and Kelly 49). It's better to drink something than nothing at all. There are also other options like tea, lemonade or juice. Try to avoid all sodas or at least limit your soda intake (Dolan and Kelly 49). Staying hydrated can help prevent common problems during pregnancy like constipation, dizziness, and dehydration ("Staying Healthy During Pregnancy"). It can also help decrease fatigue and muscle cramps ("The Importance of Drinking Water").

Try adding some natural flavor to your water like:

- Cucumbers and lemongrass
- Strawberry and basil
- Lime and basil
- Fresh ginger
- Mint leaves
- Lemon slices
- Orange slices

(Dolan and Kelly 49)

The American Pregnancy Association recommends decreasing or better yet, eliminating, caffeinated beverages during pregnancy (11). Other sources say limit caffeine intake to 200 mg (Dolan and Kelly 46, Harms and Wick 46, Roizen and Oz 84, 376, "Staying Healthy During Pregnancy"). One brewed 8-oz. cup of coffee has anywhere from 95-200 mg of caffeine ("Caffeine content for coffee, tea, soda and more", Harms and Wick 46-47). Believe it or not, even decaffeinated coffee has some caffeine ranges from 2-12 mg ("Caffeine content for coffee, tea, soda and more", Harms and Wick 46-47). Caffeine was a lot easier to cut out, or reduce, during my first

pregnancy. By the fourth pregnancy I did drink caffeine, a cup a day sometimes two cups.

Caffeine is also in chocolate, teas and soda (Dolan and Kelly 46, Harms and Wick 46-47). There are many factors that influence the amount of caffeine in both coffee and tea, such as type of bean or tea bag used, roasting and brewing times ("Caffeine content for coffee, tea, soda and more", Dolan and Kelly 46).

<u>Food and Beverages</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Caffeine in milligrams</u>
Milk chocolate	1 oz.	1-15
Cola	12 oz.	25-65
Diet Coke	12 oz.	27-37
Hot chocolate & chocolate milk	8 oz.	0-20
tea (brewed using one tea bag)	8 oz.	40-80

(Dolan and Kelly 46, "Caffeine content for coffee, tea, soda and more")

Section 3 – Let’s talk lifting (exercise descriptions)

Proper technique and what to look out for...

Two Hand Swing

The swing is the basis of all the kettlebell movements. Every true kettlebell exercise is built upon the swing. The swing will develop power in the hips, legs, back, midsection and most noticeably, the lungs. Done properly the swing will give unparalleled strength AND conditioning benefits. It can be done with lightweight and high repetitions (hundreds or thousands) or with heavyweight and lower reps (10-20). Is it better to do one over the other (light/high rep or heavy/low rep)? The answer is yes.

The swing is a hip hinge exercise. Do not squat. Push your hips back, and with a neutral spine, bend forward. Look straight ahead or down slightly, but keep your neck straight. Your shins remain vertical; perpendicular to the floor.

Initiate the return to standing position by contracting the glutes; squeeze your butt and snap your hips forward. Tighten the abs and lock your knees into a strong stance. Feet stay on the ground - heels planted and toes “gripping” the floor.

Start with the kettlebell about 16 inches out in front of you. Hinge the hips as you go down to pick it up (very important that you set up the same way you will execute the exercise). Grab the kettlebell with two hands and tilt it back by packing your shoulders. Begin by pulling the kettlebell back behind you. Immediately stand up and swing the bell to shoulder height. Pause briefly as the bell begins its descent. Wait as long as you can before you allow the weight to pull you into the backswing. Repeat ad infinitum.





One Hand Swing

Same mechanics as the two-hand swing except with one hand. Be sure to keep the hips and shoulders square. The head and neck should remain straight.





Common Mistakes:

The squatty swing - back stays too upright and the hips go down too far.

The bent over swing - back bends too much and the hips are too high.

The muscle swing - the bell is lifted with the arms and not the legs.

The partial swing - the hips are not fully extended, sometimes a result of tight hip flexors.

The anticipation swing - bending at the hips too early; anticipating the backswing.

The slow swing - the hip hinge is too slow; weak.

The Rack Position

The rack position has the kettlebell on the outside of the wrist. The handle is on the “butt” of the palm and the wrist is straight. The elbow is resting on the hip and the hand is to the inside of the shoulder. The *ball* sits in the crook of the arm.

Ladies: keep your arm and kettlebell from smashing your breasts by holding your rack position slightly to the side.

When first learning to “rack the bell,” use two hands to clean the bell into position. See next section on The Clean.



The Overhead Position

The overhead position has the arm vertical and elbow straight. The bicep is close to the ear, and the kettlebell hangs slightly behind you. Use your skeleton to support the weight and it will be much easier to hold.

Begin with the kettlebell in the rack position. Look up slightly, and with a tight grip and vertical forearm, press the weight overhead. Pause briefly before returning to the rack position. Be sure to follow the same “trajectory” on the way up and down. Repeat.



Common Mistakes:

- Improper rack and/or overhead position
- Bent wrist and/or forearm does not remain vertical during the lift
- Excessive “leaning” from the torso
- Technique changes as fatigue sets in

Press

The overhead press sets the foundation for your upper body strength. The kettlebell press in particular allows for the greatest range of motion in this all-important exercise. The benefits of the press are more than just strength; overhead pressing will develop mobility as well.

Some people will have difficulty getting their arms into a proper overhead position. This is likely a result of limited shoulder or thoracic spine mobility (caused by office work or being hunched over a computer). The kettlebell press will help fix this, but some preliminary work may be necessary.

There are two important positions in the press that need to be emphasized; the rack and the overhead positions. Spend some time getting used to these positions because other exercises will be built on top of them (e.g. clean, snatch). It's a good idea to do "rack walks" and "overhead walks" before pressing.





Clean

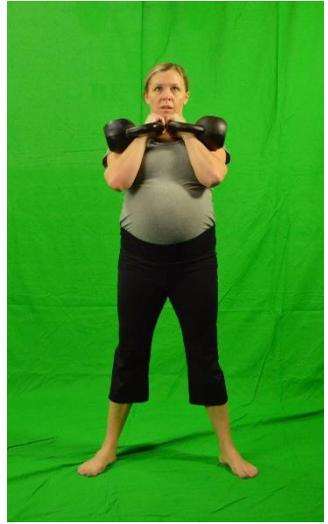
The clean can be performed as a stand-alone exercise for the hips and back, or as a transitional exercise before pressing. As such, it's better to spend time working the swing and the press before learning the clean. There are a couple reasons for this. First, you need to be able to swing in order to clean - the clean is a swing. Second, it's better to get comfortable in the rack position before ballistically swinging the kettlebell into it. You want to be familiar with the rack position enough so that when you clean the weight it goes directly into position without banging the arm. There is going to be a "toughening up" period where just the weight of the kettlebell on the back of your wrist may cause discomfort or bruising. When learning to clean, you will inevitably bang your wrist/arm as you find the timing of the exercise; so it's better to have spent a couple weeks pressing and getting used to forces that will be imparted in the rack. This will save you some pain when you start training cleans.

The clean can be thought of as a swing into the rack position. You will need to learn to "tame the arc" by swinging up and in, as opposed to straight out in front of you. As the kettlebell is upswung between the legs, the arm will pull the weight in, guiding the bell into the rack.

Remember: the hips drive, the arm guides. Do not "curl" the bell into position. Swing it normally but as the hips lock out, direct the momentum of the kettlebell so that it stays close to your body. The kettlebell should almost "roll" into position, going no higher and no further out than necessary.

The handle of the kettlebell should rest on the butt of the palm, the hand is on the inside of the shoulder and the wrist is straight. Keep the elbow down by the hip and the ball of the kettlebell resting in the triangle of the arm (touching both upper and lower arm).

To initiate the descent of the kettlebell, simply twist your wrist to the midline of the body and roll the bell out of the rack and in between your legs. Drop into the backswing and quickly straighten the elbow; no biceps curling. A traditional one-arm swing takes over and the bell is cleaned again ad infinitum.



Common mistakes:

- Curling the weight
- Swinging the weight too far out or too high
- Banging the wrist / arm
- Improper rack position
- Allowing the weight to pull the arm away from the shoulder on the descent
- Not putting the weight down the same way it was picked up

Squat

The squat sets the foundation for your lower body strength. Nothing develops the lower body like full squats, aka deep knee bends. If your flexibility allows it, you should almost always squat as low as you can. Doing so will promote flexibility and strength. Also, going below parallel (thighs parallel to the ground) activates the gluteus muscles to a higher degree.

There are two main types of kettlebell squats: 1) the goblet squat and 2) the front squat. The goblet squat is performed with two hands on one kettlebell held at face level. The front squat is performed with one (or two) kettlebell(s) held in the rack position. Start with the goblet squat.

Pick the kettlebell up with a swing and catch it at about eye level, holding it by the sides of the handle. The forearms should be pointing down and remain vertical throughout the entire squat. Initiate the descent with the hips. The hips push back and then down as the knees bend. Keep your weight on your heels - do not lean forward or allow the heels to come up off the ground. Inhale on the way down and stay tight throughout the mid-section. Go as deep as possible and try to touch the elbows to the inside of the knees. The knees should remain pointing in the same direction as the toes (e.g. if the toes are angled out 30 degrees, so should the knees). The knees should not travel forward of the toes, that is, if a line was drawn straight up from the toes, the knees would not go past that line. The back should stay flat with a neutral neck position. Pause briefly in the bottom to ensure there is no bouncing, and then return to a standing position. Repeat ad infinitum.





The front squat is performed the same way except with the kettlebell held in the rack position. You may use the free hand to help support the weight.



Common mistakes:

- Using the arms to “curl” the bell into position
- Flaring the elbows out

- Allowing the knees to bow in or come too far forward
- Leaning forward or allowing the heels to come up off the floor
- Rounding the back
- Elbows touch the mid-thighs instead of the knees
- Not locking out the hips and knees fully at the top

Get Up (aka Turkish Get Up or TGU)

The TGU is a full body exercise that requires both mobility and stability. The emphasis is on functional movement, good mechanics and symmetry. It serves as a great warm up exercise because every body part works in a delicate balance of strength and flexibility. If you lack either one, you will find the exercise difficult to do, which means you should do more of it! An inability to do the exercise correctly, on both sides, shows a lack of *something*. A good trainer familiar with the TGU and knowledgeable in anatomy should be able to tell if a person is struggling with the exercise because of tight shoulders, weak legs or what have you. In general, it's a good idea to hire a qualified instructor to learn kettlebells from, but with the TGU it is imperative.

There are several different ways to perform a TGU. In fact, when this exercise was developed some 200+ years ago by Turkish wrestlers, there was no standard way to get up; it was "get up anyway you could." However, when modern day trainers started teaching this exercise to physical therapists and movement specialists, they started to break down the exercise piece by piece in attempts to "mine" it for everything its worth. Once a standard was created only then was a system for progression possible. Progression not only in terms of the weight being used (secondary importance to the movement itself) but progression in the way of how the exercise was only in terms of the weight being used (secondary importance to the movement itself) but progression in the way of how the exercise was performed. Again, there are several different ways to do a TGU, here we will look at the most advanced version, the Kalos Sthenos method, or high bridge get up.

Before attempting the TGU with a weight, you should master the bodyweight only version. Remember, it's not about what you do, but HOW you do what you do.

The Half Get Up

Begin lying on your back with your right arm up and right knee up. Your left arm will be out at about 45 degrees and your left knee will be straight. Roll to the left and come up on your elbow - keep the right arm up. Straighten your left elbow and post up on your left hand. You should be in a tall sitting position with your shoulders down and chest out. This is the half get up position.





The Bridge

From the half get up position, lift your hips by driving your right heel into the ground. Extend your hips fully so that a straight line is created between your thigh and torso. Another straight line should be created with the arms; a “T” at your chest. Keep your right heel down at all times.



The Sweep

While maintaining a high bridge, “sweep” your left leg underneath you placing the left knee directly below you. It’s important to get the knee in the correct position so that it can support your weight fully. Once your knee is in place, move to a half kneeling position and adjust your legs so they are parallel as in a lunge position.



The Stand

From the bottom lunge position, stand up. Be sure to use your rear foot to assist you. Do not lunge off of the top of your foot - use the toes. Stand completely upright with the right hand still held above the head. You should now be in the overhead position the same as a press.



Reverse

Getting down is exactly the same as getting up but in reverse. From the standing position, step back (onto the toes) with the left leg and put your knee on the ground. Pivoting at the knee, swing your foot around, making a “windshield wiper” movement with the lower leg. Hinge at the hip and put your left hand on the ground. Sweep the left leg through and return to the bridge position. [Be sure to have enough room between your left hand and

your right foot that you can sweep the left leg.] Lower your hips to the ground, and then elbow, and then back to the ground.

I cannot stress enough the importance of taking your time to learn the nuances of this exercise. It's best to start with the half get up; do 5-10 reps before attempting the bridge. Do another 5-10 half get ups with a bridge before attempting the full get up. Do another 5-10 full get ups before attempting the shoe get up.







The Shoe Get Up

Balancing a shoe on your fist is how you will learn the right way to do a weighted get up. Using a shoe will do several things: it will ensure that you slow down and do the exercise smoothly and with no jerky movements (very important when holding a weight over your face), it will make you keep your arm straight vertical, and it will make you keep your eyes on where they should be (you should always have the kettlebell, or shoe, in your field of vision - looking away from the weight is usually a cause for dropping said weight). Do 5-10 shoe get ups before attempting the weighted get up.

When using a kettlebell

How you pick the weight up is an important step in a proper and safe TGU. First, roll to the side and get into a fetal position. Grab the bell with two hands; first with your right hand and then with your left. Roll back to your back and press the weight to the starting position. Be sure you put the bell down in the same manner upon completion. Failure to do so puts your elbow in an unfavorable position.



Packed shoulder position

The shoulders should be “packed” throughout the entire get up. Packed shoulders is the opposite of shrugged shoulders; it’s stronger and safer. Think of it as “shoulders down” and “armpits tight.”

Switching sides

Switch sides in the get up by dragging the bell on the floor over top of the head. Do not cross the bell over top of your face or your body. Either slide it across the floor, or stand up and physically move the bell to the other side. You could also turn your body to face the other direction. Whatever you do, don't put yourself in a position to have the weight dropped on you.

Another note about switching sides is that the exercise should resemble mirror images of each other when loading left vs right. Symmetry is important. If one side is different, figure out why or hire a trainer to help you fix it.

The TGU is best performed when fresh and is generally better to do at the beginning of a workout. When you are fatigued, your form will suffer and this is not an exercise that allows for poor technique. Do as many sets as you'd like but keep the reps below 5.

Common mistakes:

- Bent wrist
- Shrugging the shoulders or hunching the back
- Looking away from the weight
- Not keeping the arm straight vertical
- Lifting the heel up while bridging
- Lunging off the top of the foot
- Not allowing for enough room to sweep the leg
- Going too fast or bypassing any of the positions

Snatch

The snatch is a ballistic full body lift that works the entire posterior chain (muscles of the back) and shoulders. It's an advanced exercise that should not be attempted until the swing has been mastered and the overhead position is strong. I usually wait three months before teaching a new kettlebeller how to snatch. This will cut down the learning curve greatly

and save the trainee from many a bruised wrists. It's better to spend more time swinging and pressing early on in one's training as this will build much of the strength associated with the snatch. However, the snatch is a fun lift that allows for a new dimension in your workout.

The snatch can be thought of as a swing to the overhead position. Similar to the clean, you must "tame the arc" by swinging up, rather than swinging out. The kettlebell is "caught" in the overhead position without pressing it to lockout.

As the bell travels upward and nears the overhead position, the handle of the kettlebell will rotate in the hand, so it's necessary to loosen the grip to allow this to happen otherwise you will tear up your hands. Float the kettlebell up at the apex of your swing and "punch" through it, bringing your arm to the kettlebell instead of waiting for it to drop (i.e. bang) onto your wrist. Timing is essential here and it will likely take some practice before nailing down the technique.

When you perform the snatch correctly you'll know it, as it will have a very crisp feel to it and the lockout will snap into place. Similarly, when you perform it incorrectly, you'll know it. Which brings me to a note on wrist guards: they make kettlebell wrist guards and some people use sweatbands to cushion the wrist where the kettlebell sits. It's ok to use these on occasion, but it's better to toughen up so that you don't need them. Also, if you're banging your wrists that's actually valuable feedback telling you that you're not doing it right. If you pad your wrists you're just band-aiding the problem. My suggestion is to use wrist bands sparingly and only when pain is holding back your training.

Begin the snatch just as you would a swing, with the bell about 16" out in front of you. Hinge the hips on the way down and tilt the bell back towards you by packing the shoulder. Pull it off of the ground and into the backswing before swinging the bell up. Remember to swing up, not out, so as the hips extend direct the momentum of the bell upward by pulling in slightly. Catch the kettlebell overhead with a straight arm - all of the points of the standard overhead position apply.

To initiate the descent, turn the wrist slightly and allow the kettlebell to drop midline of the body. Do not cast it out. The bell should fall close to the body and centered between the legs into the backswing. Again, loosen the grip as the handle rotates in the hand - you'll want the handle to "jump"

from the butt of the palm (as it should be in the overhead position) to the fingers. Hinge into the backswing and repeat ad infinitum.





Common mistakes:

- Swinging the bell too far out and/or too high and banging the wrist at lockout
- Gripping the handle too tight and tearing the palms
- Pulling the weight with the arms
- Catching the bell overhead with a bent wrist
- Pressing to lockout

- Swinging off-center and putting the knees in the trajectory of the kettlebell
- Any of the common mistakes of the swing or overhead position

Deadlift

The deadlift is THE exercise that will allow you to lift the most weight. It may be the most simple of all of the compound exercises in that it is just lifting a weight off of the ground and standing up with it. The deadlift will work all the muscles in the legs and posterior chain, as well as the shoulders, arms and grip. It truly is a full body lift and one that is very practical to everyday life outside of the gym.

The deadlift is a hip hinge exercise and when performed with a kettlebell makes a great precursor to the swing, as it uses nearly the same body mechanics. And because it's performed slowly, it could also make for a good finisher exercise when the quickness of the swing has been exhausted.

To perform the kettlebell deadlift, begin with your feet spaced about shoulder-width apart and the bell directly in between your feet. With a neutral spine, hinge the hips and pick the bell up with two hands (can also be done with one hand). Keep the kettlebell in close to you as you drive your heels into the ground and stand erect. Be sure to use your glutes as you extend your hips fully - it's a good idea to exaggerate this as many people will have inactive glutes and tight hip flexors; this will help fix that. Repeat the hip hinge to lower the bell and keep everything the same on the way down. If you're going for reps, touch the ground for each rep without bouncing. If it's your last rep, or your doing singles, be sure you put the bell down the same way you picked it up (a lot of people have a habit of looking down or otherwise changing their technique on their final rep).

At the top of the deadlift, the lockout should be with the bell as low as possible to the ground. The knees and hips are fully extended, but there is no need to shrug the shoulders or bend the elbows. The shoulders should remain packed throughout the entire lift and the arms should remain straight; failure to do so will make the lift more difficult by adding unnecessary stress to the muscles.





Common mistakes:

- Starting with the weight too far out
- Rounding the back
- Shrugging the shoulders
- Bending the arms
- Not keeping a neutral neck
- Not fully extending the hips and knees at lockout

Single Leg Deadlift

The single leg deadlift is great exercise to ensure that all of the smaller muscles in the hips are working properly, and that the hips are working symmetrically. Symmetry is a very important point in proper mechanics and functional movement. Differences in the right and left sides of the body could create problems. Many such imbalances are easily fixed by unilateral exercises such as the single leg deadlift. However, if you find major differences from right to left that do not resolve themselves through practice, you should seek the help of a professional.

There are several ways to perform a single leg deadlift. With one hand contra-lateral (opposite) of the leg you're using, with one hand ipsa-lateral (same side) of the leg you're using, and with two hands. We will start with the contra-lateral single leg deadlift as I believe this is the most important of the three variations because it seems to activate the gluteus

medius the best, a muscle that many people seem to have a problem recruiting (as evidenced by the knees bowing in squatting and deadlifting movements). Also, the contra-lateral deadlift creates a cross-activation of the hips and back (left hip and right back, and vice versa) which helps create a healthy and resilient lower back.

Contra-lateral

Start with the bell on the inside of the left foot. Hinge your hips as you lift the right leg off of the floor, keeping the leg in-line with your back. Your right knee should remain as straight as possible and the toe pointing forward/down. Maintaining a flat back and neutral spine, bend over to pick the bell up with your right hand. Keep your hips level as you hinge. Be sure to bend your left knee - this is not a straight leg deadlift. Stand up by hinging the hips back forward and bringing the right leg back into position.

Initiate the descent by moving the right leg first; contract the glute and lock it into place. (The “up” leg should always move first - this will help the back stay flat, as the straighter the leg is, the straighter the back will be because the leg acts as a counter-balance; so reach the leg back as far as possible as you hinge.)

Put the bell on the floor beside in the instep of the foot and stand up unweighted. Performing singles, alternating weighted and unweighted reps, is of particular benefit of this exercise. There is something to be said for muscle recruitment when you engage, disengage and reengage the weight. Each rep should be smooth, and exactly the same, regardless if you have the load or not. Likewise, each side, left and right, should look exactly the same.





Ipsa-lateral

All of the points of the contra-lateral version remain the same except you will be lifting the kettlebell with the same hand as the side of the foot that is on the ground.

Start with the kettlebell on the outside of the right foot. Move your left leg off of the ground first, contracting the glute and keeping the leg straight and in-line with your back, hinge your hips and grab the bell with your right hand. There will be a tendency to lean to the side the weight is on. To combat this, imagine grabbing a bell with the left hand as well. Reach the left hand down so that it is level with the right and make a fist as if you were actually lifting a weight in both hands.

Perform this exercise in the same manner as you would the contralateral version, doing singles and alternating load and unloaded reps. Take note of which sides (and which versions) of the single leg / single arm deadlift are more difficult for you. If you find asymmetries, take measures to even yourself out.



Two-arms

All of the points remain the same except now you will have a kettlebell in each hand.

The two-arm version of the single leg deadlift will allow you to use a lot of weight as you will find it much easier to balance (unless you use different sized weights for each arm, which is ok, just be sure that you switch to even out your workload).

Start with a kettlebell on the outside of each foot. Remember to move the up leg first and keep the knee straight, toe down and leg as if it were an extension of the spine.



Common mistakes:

- Bending over at the back first
- Not keeping the leg straight and in line with the back
- Not keeping the hips level
- Keeping a straight leg on the “down leg”
- Not controlling the descent

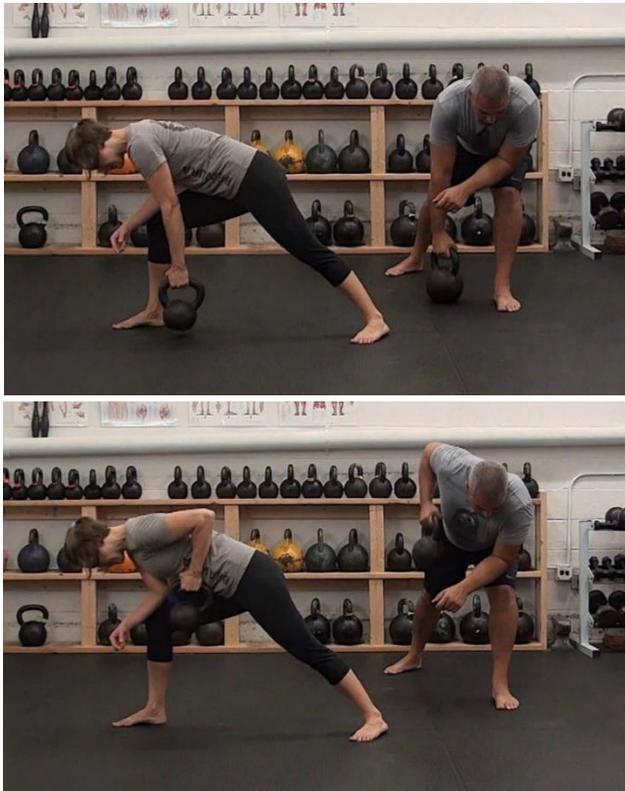
Row

The row is a basic upper body pulling exercise that works the biceps, shoulders, and the largest muscle in the upper body, the lats (latissimus dorsi). This extremely important exercise will balance out pressing and overhead movements you do as it works the antagonist muscles helping to stabilize the shoulder girdle. Also known as the bent over row, this exercise can be performed with one or two hands.

One-arm row

Start the one-arm row by putting the kettlebell on the inside of the left foot and stepping back with the right foot. You will bend over and support yourself with the left elbow posted on the left knee. Grab the bell with the right hand and pull it up to a position where the hand is near the armpit. Lower the bell and repeat. Be sure to utilize the muscles in the back by moving the scapula into retraction. Some rotation of the thoracic spine is ok, but keep your elbow weighted down on your knee - this will ensure that you're not lifting with your lower back.





Two-arm row

Start the two-arm row with two kettlebells, one on the outside of each foot. Hinge the hips as you reach down to grab the bells. Be sure to maintain a flat back with the spine as parallel to the ground as possible. Pull the bells to a position where the hands are near the armpits. Think about pinching your shoulder blades together at the top of each repetition. Some movement from the hips or back is ok (“body english”), but do not jerk the weight up and try not to let yourself rise as the set progresses.



Common mistakes:

- Lifting the weight with the lower back
- Jerking or heaving the weight up
- Not retracting the scapula
- Shortened range of motion

Straight Leg Deadlift

As the name implies, the straight leg deadlift is done with the knees straight. It is a deadlift variation that takes the quadriceps out of the exercise placing a greater emphasis on the hamstrings and back. It requires some flexibility to perform properly, but it may also help improve flexibility as well. This is a great way to deadlift when you have maxed out on what you have available and you're ready for a heavier weight.

The SLDL should be performed from a height where the lifter can reach the bell without rounding their back. The height will vary depending on the individual. If you cannot grasp the handle of the kettlebell with a flat back, you should elevate the bell with a weight plate, board, etc. to a height where you can. Likewise, if your flexibility allows for a greater range of motion, you may elevate your feet in a similar manner.

Let's assume a standard height is appropriate.

Start with the kettlebell directly in between your feet. Keeping your knees straight, and maintaining the arch in your lower back, bend at the hips to lower yourself down to pick up the weight. In this type of deadlift it's better to hold your head up; doing so will help you keep your spinal erectors contracted (e.g. back flat). Contract the hamstrings and glutes to raise yourself back up.

The knee position in the SLDL should be "soft." There is no need to lock the knees into a position of hyper-extension. Straight is sufficient.

Because the SLDL involves fewer muscles and a less advantageous biomechanical position than the conventional deadlift, much less weight will be used in this exercise. Begin with approximately 50% of what you can use in a regular kettlebell deadlift. Ease into this exercise slowly as the combination of contracting the hamstrings from the stretched position can cause some extreme post-workout soreness.



Common mistakes:

- Rounding the back
- Bending the knees
- Using greater ROM than flexibility allows
- Starting/finishing with the bell too far forward

Suitcase Deadlift

The Suitcase Deadlift (DL) is a variation where the weight will be picked up from the side, as you would a suitcase. This will cause the opposite side to contract. The oblique muscles, on the sides of the midsection, will have to work to counter the load. The Suitcase DL is another good variation to make a light kettlebell feel heavier and get more out of a kettlebell you've outgrown.

Start with the kettlebell on the outside of your foot. Hinge your hips as you normally would and grab the bell with the hand of the same side. Keep your head and neck straight, eyes looking forward. It's very important when doing the Suitcase DL to keep your back straight and NOT lean to the side. A technique I have found helpful is to imagine grabbing a bell on the unloaded side as well. Literally reach down with your off hand and make a fist at the same height as the hand that is actually grabbing the bell. Drive your heels into the ground and stand up.

Be sure to put the bell down the same way you pick it up. That includes the last rep. For whatever reason, there's a tendency to throw technique completely out the window when putting the bell down at the completion of the set. The last thing you want to do is twist and flex the spine in fatigued state. Don't do it!



Common mistakes:

- Leaning/twisting to the side
- Rounding the back
- Starting/finishing with the bell too far forward

Lunges

The lunge is the single-leg version of the squat and useful for maintaining balanced strength in each leg. The lunge also brings into play smaller stabilizer muscles that might not get utilized in the squat.

Lunges can be performed with the kettlebell held in several different positions. You can hold the bell in the rack, the goblet position or in a hang. Either way, the body position will remain the same. For simplicities sake, and because you can use the most weight this way, we will perform the lunge with the kettlebells in the hang position.

Start by standing in between two kettlebells. Each bell should be aligned with the mid-foot and just outside your feet. Deadlift both kettlebells. From a standing position, step back with one foot and lower the knee to the ground to a position a few inches (2"-3") off of the ground. In this position, your knees and hips should be bent at 90 degrees and your torso should stay upright. Keeping the heel of your front leg down, drive that heel into the ground and step back to a standing position.

Repeat by alternating each leg, or you can do a certain number of reps before switching legs.

You may do these as "walking lunges" - but don't walk backwards - in that case, step forward. You may also do these with a single kettlebell. Play around with the different variations and combinations (bell in right hand stepping with left foot, or vice versa) to see which one you like best. Find a style that suits you best and work it, but pay attention to symmetry.



Common mistakes:

- Leaning forward / bending over
- Stepping back too far / too close
- Lifting the heel of the front leg
- Not going down far enough
- Going down too far and hitting your knee on the ground

Sumo Squat / Deadlift

The Sumo Squat or Deadlift is performed with a wide foot spacing - outside of shoulder width.

The purpose of this stance is to target the hips. The only difference between the sumo squat vs sumo deadlift is where the bell is held; in the rack/goblet position when squatting, and in the hang when deadlifting.

Just like in any other squat or deadlift, the knees should point in the same direction as the toes. A more “open” foot position (toes pointed out) is normal here.

When squatting it’s best to get the bell into position before assuming the sumo stance. When deadlifting you’ll simply pick the bell up from the sumo stance. In either version, keep the torso upright as you descend. Go down as far as necessary to reach the bell, or as far your flexibility allows when squatting. Stay tight in the bottom position and return to standing with a full hip extension.



Common mistakes:

- Leaning forward / bending over too much
- Rounding the back
- Feet spaced too far apart

Push Press

The Push Press is an overhead press that involves the use of the legs to initiate the upward momentum of the weight. What might be viewed by some as a “cheat” press, the push is just a technique that allows the lifter to put more weight overhead. This is a particularly useful exercise when trying to move up a bell size; you can push press the weight overhead and then perform a slow negative back down - this is a great way to build strength.

Begin the push press by cleaning the weight into the rack position. Bend the knees slightly and “heave” the bell overhead. Finish with a press out. Be sure to keep the kettlebell tight in the rack position as you dip down. You want the energy to transfer from the legs through the body and into the bell - that is best done when there is no space between the elbow and hip - the leg drive goes from the floor, through the hips, into the elbow, which propels the bell up.

You may initiate the descent with a controlled drop back to the rack, or a slow negative. If you’re going for reps I’d suggest the former; if you’re

trying to build strength for pressing, the latter.

Common mistakes:

- Loose rack position
- Bending at the hips not the knees in the push
- Dropping too low to initiate the push
- Any of the common mistakes in the press

Jerk

The jerk is very similar to the push press except the jerk calls for a second knee bend; the lifter drops down to “meet” the bell at the lockout. There is no press out in a jerk - the upward movement of the bell is initiated with the legs and finished with the legs. The jerk is an advanced movement that will take some practice, and most likely hands on coaching, to get the movement right. For this reason, the instructions on the jerk have purposely been left vague - there are no substitutions for a good coach!

Let's Modify

As your baby grows, so will your belly. Soon some exercises will become more challenging. Your center of gravity shifts, your weight increases and that belly becomes harder and harder to get around (Dolan and Kelly 64, Lurie 254, "Staying Healthy During Pregnancy", Wang and Apgar). The good thing is some of the lifts can be modified to accommodate your new beautiful figure.



The weights you were previously using, during the first trimester and maybe into your second trimester, should now be decreased, if you haven't already. Assuming that most women begin to show around six months, whenever this becomes true for you try these modifications to better assist you with lifting. Each woman is unique and carries differently, so change your exercises based on your body needs. Go with what feels good to you.

Try lower weights with higher reps (Dolan and Kelly 64). If any exercise becomes uncomfortable, try to modify the exercise or stop that lift all together.

Swings:

Mid-pregnancy I still was able to do two-arm swings, but I had to have a wider hand grip/positioning on the bell. When this became uncomfortable or my belly got in the way I switched to one-arm swing. With a one-arm swing you have to be mindful of where your belly is and try to swing around it.

Squats:

Try holding the kettlebell differently, as your belly grows. Maybe a bottoms up hold. You can also try squatting into a chair seated behind you (Lurie 261-264). Another great thing is plain body weight squats, if it's too much to hold the kettlebell, which you may find happens later into your 3rd trimester.



Single leg deadlifts and lunges:

Try holding the back of a chair or bench for added stability (Lurie 254-255). You can also use body weight for these exercises as well.



Rows:

Try leaning over a chair or bench for added stability (Lurie 258-260).

Push-ups and planks:

Try doing push-ups with knees on floor or wall push-ups (Lurie 260-261).





Sample workouts

During 1st trimester

Workout 1

- 2 arm swings 16kg x 10
- Cleans 12kg x10
- Push-ups x10
- Plank hold x30 seconds
- Squats 16kg x 10
- Repeat x3

Workout 2

- Squats 12kg x 20
- Snatches 12kg x 10
- 2 arm swings 16kg x 20
- Clean, press & squat 12kg x 5
- Repeat x3

Workout 3

- Rows 16kg x 10
- Jerks 12kg x 10
- Alternating lunges 12kg (in both arms) x 20 steps
- Single leg deadlift 12kg x 5
- Repeat x3

During 2nd trimester

Workout 1

2 arm swings 12kg x 30
Press & squat 12kg x 5
Rocking squats 12kg x 20
Snatches 8kg x 10
Repeat x2

Workout 2

1 arm swing 12kg x 10
Deadlift 12kg x 10
Alternating snatch and clean 8kg x 5
Push-ups x10
Repeat x3

Workout 3

Cleans 12kg x 10
Snatches 12kg x 10
Clean, press & squat 12kg x 5
2 arm swings 12kg x 30
Repeat x2

During 3rd trimester

Workout 1

Suitcase deadlift 8kg x 10
Snatches 8kg x 10
Sumo squats 12kg x 10
Lunges 8kg in both arms x 10
1 arm swings 8kg x 20
Repeat x2

Workout 2

Clean & press 8kg x 10
Single leg deadlift 12kg x 10
Rows 8kg x 10
Modified plank hold x30 seconds
Modified push-ups x10
Repeat x2

Workout 3

1 arm swings 8kg x 15
Press 8kg x 10
Squats 12kg x 10
Straight leg deadlift 12kg x 10
Repeat x2

Section 4 – Postpartum: Getting it done with kids

Nutrition and fitness postpartum

You need to be smart about your eating. The same healthy eating habits you got into during your pregnancy you need to try and maintain after your pregnancy. This can be extremely difficult because after giving birth you don't have that much time to fix healthy meals. If you are breastfeeding, you need to increase your caloric intake based on your workouts and to keep up with the demands of milk production (Palmer and Knorr). If you are not breastfeeding, you will only need to adjust your caloric intake based on your workouts. Remember if your goal is to lose those pregnancy pounds gained, you will need to burn more calories than you put in.

For new moms, whether breastfeeding or not, when restarting an exercise regimen be careful not to overdo it (Harms and Wick 280). Light to moderate exercise is great and that's where you should start (Harms and Wick 279, Palmer and Knorr, Roizen and Oz 331). Remember when you are getting back into your workouts, the goal is not losing all the weight immediately (Dolan and Kelly 204). It took you nine (or ten) months to grow and develop this new life inside, it will take time to shed those extra pounds (Roizen and Oz 276-277).

For the women who are breastfeeding, some studies have shown a slight increase in lactic acid released in the breast milk after extreme workouts or exercising to the point of exhaustion (Palmer and Knorr, Quinn, Gale and Carey, Wallace, Ernsthausen and Inbar, Wallace and Rabin, Wallace, Inbar and Ernsthausen). Although, this has been shown to have no lasting effects on the newborn and levels return to normal within approximately one-hour post workout (Palmer and Knorr, Quinn, Gale and Carey, Wallace, Ernsthausen and Inbar, Wallace and Rabin, Wallace, Inbar and Ernsthausen). For your comfort and to avoid any changes, even slight, in your breast milk feed your baby right before you exercise (Harms and Wick 280, Roizen and Oz 332). This would be the best-case scenario. It will also feel more comfortable to exercise when your breasts are not engorged (Roizen and Oz 332).

Please do not be discouraged if you do not lost weight as fast as you thought. And try not to compare yourself to others. We are all made

differently, with different genes and genetic make-ups. Some may be able to lose their weight super-fast whereas others it may take a few months. The important thing is to make attainable goals and try your best to meet them (Harms and Wick 280). Remember you can do this!

When you start getting back to your workout routines take it slow, focus on proper form and regaining your strength. Be careful not to lose weight too quickly especially if you're breastfeeding (Dolan and Kelly 204). Losing weight too quickly can cause a decrease in your milk production (Dolan and Kelly 204). If breastfeeding, you will need to increase your water intake to about 13 eight-ounce cups on the days you exercise (Water: How much should you drink every day").

I have a feeling most who are reading this book are like me and want to get moving as soon as possible. But stay calm, take your time and focus on getting back to being physically fit the right way. You have so much on your plate right now. Caring for a newborn along with yourself, keeping up with the household chores like the laundry, the cooking, the cleaning, the grocery shopping and doing this with very little sleep. It's important to know when you need a break and give your body time to heal and recuperate (Harms and Wick 280). You should not be working out every day of the week either. We all need to rest and let our muscles recover before furthering our full muscle potential.

When restarting your kettlebell workouts, you may want to try the same weights you ended with and at a moderate intensity level. Make time to exercise, proceed slowly and don't overdo it (Dolan and Kelly 204-205, Harms and Wick 279). Remind yourself how great it feels to increase your heart rate and really sweat. Not only that but how much happier you feel because you exercised. Be sure to start your Kegels as early as possible (Harms and Wick 279). Your body will love you for that, especially your bladder.

Make sure you are getting out and interacting with others who have the same likeness in fitness and healthy living as you do. Go somewhere to be positively influenced and that will keep encouraging you to be a better, healthier you. This may be a local gym, a mom's group or even just being active in a chat room or reading a blog.

When I was working, it was easier for me to pack a healthy lunch and snacks. Now that I am a stay at home mom, I noticed my eating habits started to become more lax. When I attended the Tactical Strength Challenge at our gym, I met other athletes, and was reminded of those good

healthy eating habits. I also found encouragement to keep progressing and challenging myself to be stronger and improve myself. This was a great wake-up call for me and I realized then and there that I needed to put myself around like-minded people. I got so used to being around the kids, that their picky eating habits were starting to become my own. Not the other way around. I had to choose the other path, back to healthy eating for all of us.



Jess with cousins Sarah and Alex.

If we as parents choose wisely and make good healthy choices at the grocery store, our homes will always be filled with the smarter foods. Don't fall victim to processed foods. It doesn't take that much longer to cut up fresh fruits and vegetables. Be a positive role model.

Getting back to physical activity postpartum

Walking is always the best way to start getting back into any physical activity (Dolan and Kelly 204-205, Harms and Wick 279, Roizen and Oz 331). Kettlebell training came a little later. I have listed below when I restarted my kettlebell lifts postpartum. Doctor's recommendations for restarting an exercise regimen are typically six weeks after a natural delivery and eight weeks after a C-section (Lurie 270). I did not always follow the doctor's recommendations. I know my body and carefully began my kettlebell training when my body felt ready (Harms and Wick 279). You

make your own decision or follow your doctor's recommendations. Whatever you are most comfortable with. Remember everyone is different and each delivery is unique. Go with your gut and pay attention to how your body feels. If you need more time to heal, take it.

Postpartum activities resumed:

- 1st baby -natural delivery
 1. walking four days' after
 2. lifting kettlebells 24 days' after
- 2nd baby- natural delivery
 1. walking ten days' after
 2. lifting kettlebells 30 days' after
- 3rd baby - C-section
 1. walking 40 days' after
 2. lifting kettlebells 60 days after (Being a nurse I know and have seen firsthand what can happen if you don't take proper care of a surgical incision. I wanted to be careful so my incision site would heal properly and without any complication.)
- 4th & 5th babies- natural delivery
 1. walking 16 days' after
 2. lifting kettlebells 34 days' after

Functional Movement Screen

If your trainer or someone in your area offers the Functional Movement Screen, it would greatly benefit you to have this done. This screening identifies dysfunctional movements (which you are sure to have after giving birth) and asymmetries, and seeks to correct them with a series of prescribed exercises. The FMS also looks for pain, which if any of the movements cause, you should be seeing a sports medicine professional to resolve, not a fitness professional.

The best kettlebell exercises to practice on your road to recovery

Always restart your kettlebell training with the basics: swings, press, rows and squats. Use lighter kettlebells at first. Once your body gets acquainted with the movements, increase your weight. As long as you are pain free with these exercises continue.

Starting with two-arm swings, focus on activating and engaging every muscle. Squeezing your glutes, hamstring and quads, tightening your abdomen, low back and pelvic (Kegel) and let's not forget your lats, shoulders and grip. Wow! Now that's a lot of muscle groups being worked in one exercise. I would recommend doing one and/or two-arm swings in sets of 20-50 at first, try doing 200-300 total. Once this become easier, go higher. Do sets of 50-100, totaling 500-800 swings. This will give you a good start on engaging and activating practically all your muscles, not to mention help shedding those extra pounds.

Along with your kettlebell lifts, it's a great idea to work on those abdominal muscles. This can be accomplished through a wide variety of exercises. I did several different exercises that focused on strengthening the core such as plank holds, flank holds, push-ups, one-arm push-up position hold, crunches and squirms. I also found that chin-ups, pull-ups and leg hangs challenged me even more to strengthen my core. With the last three exercises, you will need access to a chin up bar. Dan put a few bars up in the kids' swing set area. (If you are interested in good solid core strength, I recommend investing in some kind of chin-up bar or check out your local playground.)



Jess and Jonathan practicing hang time in the back yard.

A fun way to add in additional abdominal work is to do plank holds in between your lifts. This is an awesome exercise that really engages your core and believe me you will feel it. Try starting with ten-second holds and gradually build up your time. Challenge yourself and remember to set

attainable goals. Once you have reach 20-30 second holds, try the one-arm push-up hold. In push-up position with arms locked out (extended), place right hand over left pec muscle and hold for ten seconds. Then do other side, left hand over right pec muscle and hold for ten seconds. Do these three times on each side. Remember to focus on keep your body tense, squeeze those muscles.

Plank hold:



One-arm push-up:



There are many other kettlebell exercises like cleans, snatches and windmills that will activate those core abdominal muscles. Push-ups are an effective way to strengthen the core and upper body because you need to focus on keeping the entire body tight and in line. Once you start feeling stronger in your abdomen then you can add in squirms and crunches. Try doing your crunches while holding an 8kg or 12kg kettlebell. Doing a variety

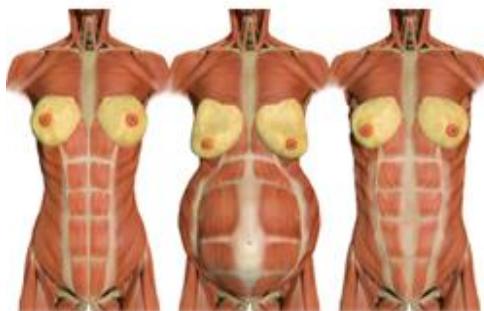
of these exercises will do wonders for rebuilding and restoring your core abdominal muscles.

Back to practicing the basics. Continue working on your press, rows and squat, which are all great exercises to restart that basic physical strength and power. If you find that you are struggling to keep proper form with weights, try using bands. I recommend band training to re-activate muscles groups and to strengthen the body before adding extra weights. Body weight squats are a wonderful way to start building those leg muscles.

Once you feel good with the basics, start increasing your weight and begin to venture into harder more challenging lifts. Two examples of more challenging lifts are the Turkish get up and the single leg dead lift. These two exercises are special to me because they were recommended after completing my functional movement screen following the birth of the twins. The Turkish get up was the hardest for me due to my lack of muscle tone, especially in my core and lower body. This exercise exposed my weaknesses. It focuses on balance, coordination and strength, something I was lacking. Another lift that I found helped me with recovery was the single leg deadlift. It also focuses on balance, coordination and strength. It took much work and determination but I continue to do better at these two exercises and feeling stronger because of them.

Getting back my overall body strength wasn't as hard as it was getting my abdominal strength back. After the birth of my first two children I didn't find it too grueling. However, after my C-section and the delivery of the twins, I had a very tough and challenging time getting that core strength back. The good news is it can be done!

(This picture shows Diastasis Recti - which means separation of the rectus abdominis. Which can happen to some women after pregnancy.)



<https://www.fisioterapia-online.com/sites/default/files/styles/large/public/foto2.png?itok=jMA1RW6T>

I'm not looking for those six pack abs anymore, but developing those core stabilizers muscles are a great benefit, especially if you suffer from any kind of low back pain. Strengthening your abs helps to realign your body, taking a lot of that stress off your low back. Not to mention helping you improve your posture. So, get to it. Get motivated and start working on those abs. Strengthening your core is going to increase your overall body power. Plus, bathing suit season is always right around the corner.

How to get it all done

Whether this is your 1st baby or 2nd or more, find time to take care of yourself. You need to! You will need to practice your time management skills now more than ever. Taking care of a newborn is hard work, and yet very rewarding. And all done on very little sleep. You need to be creative and inventive to find that exercise time or as I like to call it me time.

The best thing about a kettlebell workout is that it doesn't take a lot of time. I would say minimum shoot for at least 20 minutes three times a week. Longer if you have the time and more days if you can fit it in. All you need is the desire and motivation to do it. This is your body we are talking about, and you need to be strong and healthy so you can care for your new and growing family. I believe you are as old as you feel. And if that's the case exercise will help you feel younger than you really are. I know that's the case with me, I still feel like I'm 24.

So, let's start, plan your day or even better your week and scheduling in those workouts. Here are a few workout options to try with your new little one with you. First is nap time, this is the best time because you can take your time and it's quiet. You could get in a full 60-minute workout, eat and still have time to shower. If your baby is in the cat nap stages, you may only be able to get in a 20-minute workout. You will have those days when you just want to get a nap yourself and that is okay. Take one, you deserve it! To get the best of both worlds, try laying down for the first 45-60 minutes then get up splash some water on your face and start lifting. This worked a few times for me and I could get in a 20-30-minute workout.



You can also try working out with your child in the room with you. Depending on the age of the child, you can try putting them in a bouncy seat or pack and play. I have also used the assistance of the good ole television to keep them occupied while I got in a quick workout. Always try to remember to have a snack and drink ready for them. That way you don't have to stop everything and tend to their needs. Best to be prepared and just say, "here you go." Try giving them a coloring book and crayons or play dough. Again, depends on the age of the child, electronic devices work well too.



I like to exercise outside, when weather permits. And the children follow in tow. Getting this routine down after I had the twins was a little time consuming at first but worked great. The twins went in the pack and play and the older three children played with sidewalk chalk, rode bikes, or played on our swing set.



When you have your child (or children) around you during a workout, please be extra vigilant about where they are, making sure they do not get too close to you when lifting. As my children grow, I teach them the safe zone when mommy's lifting kettlebells. Even with the older children reinforcement is sometimes necessary. Safety first!

Swings are not my favorite to do when the kids are running around, but it can be done. Too quickly they can be in close range of the kettlebell. I will switch up my exercises and do things like presses, rows or squats. This way I am still able to get in some exercise and keeping everyone safe and out of harm's way.



Another thing to try is phone a friend. She can come over with her child (or children) and you ladies can take turns babysitting so the other can work out. Depending on one another's schedule for that day, you can shoot for 30 minutes for each or longer if you both have the time. Nice, right?! This works great because you are still able to get a nap or just have some down time when the baby takes a nap. You can always ask your husband, when he gets off work. Sometimes Dan and I would work out together, taking turns doing sets. When I was doing a set, Dan would play with the baby (and later kids) and then vice versa. What better way to have some family time? Best of all you both are demonstrating great ways to live active, healthier lives.



I also used my family; parents, grandparents, in-laws, aunt's, uncle's and friends-pretty much anyone that was willing to give a helping hand. Not everyone works the same hours, plus some are retired. You never know who will help out, you just have to ask. Trust me if this is the first grandbaby, everyone will be wanting to see and love on that child.

You can call me crazy but sometimes I would even get up before the kids to get in a little workout. I did not do this a lot but if I needed to I would. Speaking of getting up early, please make sure you are getting the proper rest. If you are lacking sleep, feeling sluggish or under the weather, take a day or a few days off. Taking care of your new baby is your primary job now, but you need to be healthy and strong to maintain your new role as mom. There are plenty of ways to get in some exercise and get your rest. All you have to do is be creative.

Teaching kid's fun ways to be active

Being active is something I am very passionate about and I try to instill this in my children. One thing that we stress in our family is getting the kids involved in activities. Any kind of activity, not necessarily organized sports. We love playing outside. When Dan or I work out, either at the house or at our gym, we take the kids with us. We encourage them to watch and help count reps. I even found three lb. kettlebells, and purchased two sets. One red and the other blue, perfect for the kids to practice with. The kids all do swings and presses, just like mom and dad. It's so cute watching them mimic us.



The kids run around our gym; unrolling yoga mats, hanging from squat racks, and kicking around beach balls (we keep some there especially for them). We encourage them to climb, hang and lift. All under proper supervision and with spotters of course. I believe it's good to encourage all kids to be active. It's even better that as a parent you show them that you like to be active too. What better way to teach this than by example?



We encourage all kinds of exercising. I keep hula hoops, jump ropes and sidewalk chalk (for hopscotch) around for family fun. They get a kick out of it when Dan and/or I play these games with them. Any kind of activity that gets them up and moving around we support. Dan purchased an agility ladder and a slack line. The slackline is great party fun too. Who doesn't want to try to walk a tightrope? It's a terrific way to test and practice your balance.

If you make exercise fun and exciting, kids will enjoy it. We often have races up and down the driveway, cheering each other on. Having a good old time laughing, clapping and cheering for each other. We try not to be too competitive, just enjoy being together. We've got boxing gloves, punching bags, and pads, too. They all love putting on the gloves and boxing with dad or Lolo (grandpa). Dan and I also practice our punches from time to time, and again the kids see this and they suddenly want to join in the fun.

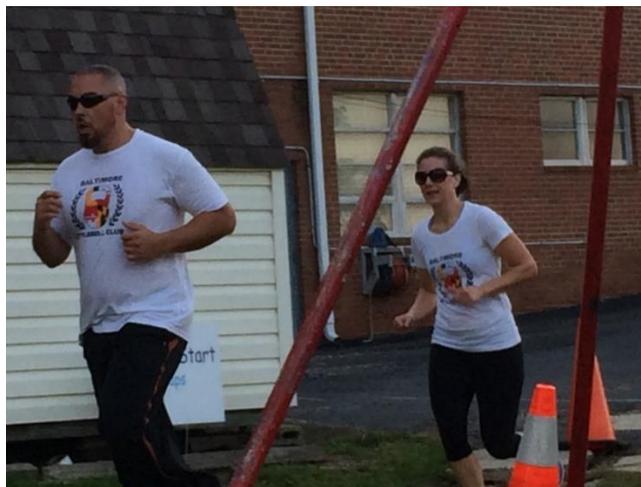


Other great ideas to try with your children are some of those old-time games you and I used to play when we were kids. My kids and I play freeze tag, tag and cops and robbers. Oh, and do you remember capture the flag? They have taught me a few new games like zombies and something called ketchup and mustard. We also play Simon says, red light, green light and mother may I. Typically we play these games while waiting for the bus. Depending on what decade you grew up in, I'm sure you had your own fun childhood games.



Sports are also a terrific way to get your kids interested in physical activities and staying active. Being part of a team helps them develop teamwork and better self-esteem. If you do put your child in sport activities be sure that you, your spouse or a family member can attend their practices and games. This shows your child emotional support as well. You are their biggest cheerleader on the field and in life!

All in all, if you instill this love for movement and physical activity early on in their lives, they have a better chance to live strong and healthy lives as adults. Investing in one's physical health and well-being is one of the best gifts a parent can give to their child.



Section 5 – Workout programs

Keeping your workouts fun and fresh

There are many different types of kettlebell lifts and techniques that you can use. For example, you can do hard style swings or relaxed style swings (also known as GS). One uses more tension during the swing and the other is a more relaxed style, more so for kettlebell sport or competitions. Another technique to try is circuit training. This is when you take short rest periods in between each exercise. You can either do one exercise or several different exercises with short rests breaks. The rest time can be up to you, anywhere from ten seconds or up to one minute.

Just to give you an idea... one circuit training workout I came up with was swings alternated with running. I did 25 hard style two-arm swings then run around my block. I would do these four times, which equates to about one mile and 100 swings.

There are so many exercises you can do with kettlebells. Look back at old journals (if you keep them) and you will be surprised at the stuff you forgot you used to do.

Here are a few great exercise routines that I use:

1. Standard workout

2 arm swings 20

Press 5

Row 10

Squat 10

The variations that can be used on this Standard workout:

For this workout, you can repeat times x3, x4, or x5. You can use one kettlebell for all lifts or increase your weight for some. For example, do swings with the 16kg and 12kg for presses and rows and 16kg for squats. As you get stronger try increasing the weight for all lifts or only one or two. Another variation is to keep the same weight but increase the reps of either all the exercises or only a few. You can also make this a circuit training program, and only take 30 seconds (or 60 seconds) of rest in between each exercise.

Another great workout for endurance and conditioning is something

called a ladder. A ladder consists of doing the one exercise or more exercises using an ascending pattern. Some ladders consist of an ascending and descending pattern. Each increasing set performed will be referred to as a rung. Let's use the press as an example, to begin the first rung press the bell once and put it down. Pick the bell up and press it two times then put it down, that's the second rung. Now pick it up again, press it for three times and put it down, that makes the third rung. That would be your first ladder. You can do three ladders of 1, 2, 3, this would be an ascending ladder only. You can try this with a variety of different exercises. Look at the examples below to get a feel for different ladders.

1. **Sample of ladder using one exercise:**

Snatch ladder with 12kg.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 with breaks in between, after 10 snatches take a break for as long as you need. Then finish ladder, start back at 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 with no breaks. If you need a rest during the descend, take a break on the last snatch of a rung. Hold bell high with arm locked out and breath, once you catch your breath, continue the descend.

2. **Sample of ladder using two exercises**

Basic Warm-up:

2 arm swings 12kg x 20 = III

Press 12kg x 5

A. Workout 1

Day 1:

Press 16kg x 1, 2, 3 = III

Squats 16kg x 5 = III

(Alternating between press and squat.)

Day 2:

Press- 16kg x 1, 2, 3 = IIII

Squats- 16kg x 5 = IIII

Day 3:

Press- 16kg x 1, 2, 3 = IIIII

Squats- 16kg x 5 = IIIII

Day 4:

Press- 16kg x 1, 2, 3 = III

Squats- 16kg x 5 = III

B. Workout 2

Snatch ladder with 12kg x 5, 10, 15, 20, 15, 10, 5.

ALTERNATE WITH

Plank hold for single or double time.

(Single time for instance would look like: 5 snatches, 5 second plank hold, 10 snatches, 10 second plank hold, and so on... For double time: 5 snatches, 10 second plank hold, 10 snatches, 20 second plank hold, and so on...)

Exercise bands

Along with my kettlebells, I use exercise bands. Different widths and lengths to do various kinds of resistance training. I also use these bands to do corrective exercises, to help me strengthen specific muscles and better my range of motion after delivery. This was another tool that helped me get back in shape after babies.



I used the resistance bands to help strengthen those hard to reach muscles that weren't being activated properly due to pregnancy. These muscles were evident to me when I did my functional movement screen with

Dan. He could pinpoint which muscles needed to be worked to get the proper range of motion in my lifts. Using these bands as a rehab tool helped me strengthen my musculature that was weak and helped me keep proper form when lifting. Eventually, I was able to increase my kettlebell weights overall and without injury. Another benefit of the resistant bands is you can take them anywhere just like kettlebells.

Examples of exercises:

Monster walk

Lateral wall

Double press

Elbow pulls

Knee extends

Rows

Section 6 - Taking a closer look into each pregnancy

Feelings about pregnancy and my body

I had so many questions about what to expect during pregnancy. Especially, when it came to working out. I sought to find information everywhere. I read books, searched the net, asked friends and family and yet none of my questions were really being answered. I would have to go through this experience and learn for myself.

I had a lot of motivation to work out at the beginning of my first pregnancy. Working out for me in general helps me relieve a lot of stress and tension. Plus, the added benefit of keeping my bowels regular. I figured it was best to continue my exercises throughout my entire pregnancy. I was a little scared and nervous of the changes my body was about to go through. I thought about how my body was going to look after giving birth? How much weight would I gain? How big would I get? Would I get lots of stretch marks? Would I ever get back my pre-pregnancy body? How quickly would I lose the weight? I had lots of questions that I just could not answer.

Some of the hardest questions were about working out while pregnant. What was safe? How long and how hard should I work out? What weights were appropriate? How high should my heart rate be during my workouts? Knowing that I wanted to be the healthiest I could be during pregnancy; these questions only gave me more motivation and dedication to workout.

I wanted to be safe but I also wanted to be healthy. I wanted to show other women that it is okay to train while pregnant. I figured if I could do it with great success, that other women might be encouraged and inspired to do the same. With this being my first pregnancy, I had plenty of time to work out. I was able to keep my typical workout schedule of three or four days a week. I alternated between home kettlebell workouts and cardio time at the gym. (This was years ago, when I had a gym membership, before we opened our own gym.)

I was also working a full-time job as a registered nurse. Working at the hospital gave me the flexibility to be at home more with my baby. I would work three nights a week, 12-hour shifts. I didn't have the most ideal sleep life but I enjoyed the night shift. Even with my sleep cycle off and with

the new tiredness from being pregnant, I still managed to get in my workouts. No excuses.

My thoughts on exercise throughout each of my pregnancies

Each pregnancy is unique and different. Just like each child has different strengths, weaknesses and personalities, each pregnancy comes with new experiences and challenges. Let's look at my personal experiences.

1. What to expect each trimester:



<http://www.thepregnancyzone.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/The-stages-of-pregnancy.jpg>

1st trimester:

During those first few early months I was always tired. Rightfully so, my body was working hard forming a beautiful new life. I found this a good time during my pregnancies to workout, because I didn't have that baby bump yet along with all the extra weight. However, having said that, the overwhelming tiredness can make exercising habits more lax. Most of the time I just wanted to curl up and take a nap.

Be sure to find your best motivator and use it. Mine was knowing that every workout I did would give me the endurance I needed for the delivery process. Not to mention, how much easier it would be to get back into shape postpartum. If I stayed on the right course now, I just knew it would

be easier afterwards. Stay strong and focus on maintaining the muscle mass you already have, to better your overall pregnancy and delivery experience.

2nd trimester:

With the first three pregnancies, my energy returned and I felt somewhat normal again. This is probably the best time to work out. I did have to start using some modifications for my lifts, but I was still able to get in good workouts. With my energy level high again, I was enthusiastic about training. Still, thinking of my motivators gave me more drive and ambition to keep my body as physically fit as possibly.

Another wonderful thing that happened was the nausea, if I had any, finally went away. I was still sleeping good too. A full 6-8 hours a night and not too much getting up in the middle of the night to pee. My little belly bump was starting to pop out. I was beginning to eat smaller meals and snacks throughout the day. Once that baby starts to grow, there's not much room in there for big meals. I kept healthy snack options available in my car, purse and work bag. Of course, with each pregnancy I craved different foods.

Food craving fun facts:

1st pregnancy- watermelon

2nd pregnancy- peanut butter sandwich

3rd pregnancy- pancakes

4th pregnancy- apples and peanut butter

During the twin pregnancy, my energy returned but the pressure on my pelvic girdle was greatly increasing and causing pain. My belly grew so fast, I was already showing and had a tough time sleeping. Not to mention I was getting up to pee every three hours. All my meals were small at this point. My belly was getting so big, it was hard to find maternity shirts that covered my extra-large baby bump.

3rd trimester:

I found my energy level slowly decreasing. The tiredness creeping back. The baby puts on most his or her weight in the third trimester. I thought I felt huge with the first three but with the twins I felt enormous. And I was! When active I was becoming out of breath quicker. My sleep was interrupted by frequent trips to the bathroom. I believe the sleep

interruptions are nature's way of preparing you for a newborn. My workouts though started getting less and less. I decreased my weights and decreased my reps. I tried to stay active but wasn't trying to win a medal. More lax workouts at this point. I was doing more light cardio workouts like walking, the elliptical or a stationary bike (if I still was able to pedal without my knees bumping my belly).

2. Taking a closer look at my energy, water and caffeine consumption, exercising and complications for each pregnancy

The graphic features the title "Pregnancy Breakdown" in a decorative font, with "cherry blossom love" written in smaller text below it. Below the title is a table with three columns: "Trimester", "Month", and "Week".

Trimester	Month	Week
1	One Two Three	1-4 5-8 9-13
2	Four Five Six	14-17 18-21 22-26
3	Seven Eight Nine	27-30 31-35 36-40

<http://cherryblossomlove.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Pregnancy-Breakdown-2.png>

Baby #1

When I first found out I was pregnant, I must admit I was a little nervous about exercising. I did not want to do anything to hurt the baby or cause a miscarriage. Because of these worries I was super cautious, I lowered my weights and reps fairly early. I searched for any information I

could on pregnancy and weight training, which I must say was very slim, especially specific to kettlebell training. I continued my workouts and carefully trained throughout my pregnancy. I had no contraindications to stop me or caution me from training. I was healthy and had a wonderful pregnancy.

1st trimester

- very fatigued but could nap anytime I wanted to
- no nausea
- drank lots of water - what the doctor recommended throughout pregnancy
- almost eliminated all caffeine - decaf coffee, still had chocolate throughout pregnancy
- was motivated to get up and move around

2nd trimester

- high energy levels
- started walking more

3rd trimester

- stopped lifting kettlebells at 38 weeks
- continued walking up until delivery
- moderate energy, felt good
- small frequent healthy meals



After Andrea was born I had a ton of soreness, mainly in my groin area. Being my first delivery and the first time my body had experienced such an amazing process, I wasn't surprised by all the soreness. Although, I felt like it lasted longer than it should have. I had an internal tear that required a few stitches, but other than that everything went smooth.

Baby #2

During this pregnancy, I was so nauseated. From morning to night, I felt ill. I was also extremely tired and tried to nap whenever I could. Feeling all tuckered out and still trying to keep up with a 14-month-old is a daunting task. I didn't have the desire to workout. My motivation was still there, so I made myself do it, although I was more lax about it. Some days I took off and other days I pushed through. I would think about childbirth and post-delivery, how hard it was getting back my pre-pregnancy shape. That was always a positive thought though, that was my motivation. If I exercised now to keep my muscles strong, I wouldn't have to struggle so much after this little guy arrived. I did not have any contraindication for exercise in the beginning but did run into one later, which I had to stop briefly until I was cleared again for active. Once cleared I carefully and slowly returned to my exercise routine. This too was a great pregnancy and surprisingly I did not feel as large as I did with the first.



1st trimester

- extreme fatigue (couldn't nap whenever because I had a toddler too)
- terrible nausea (lived on oatmeal and ginger ale)
- drank almost what the doctor recommended throughout pregnancy
- cut caffeine in half- ½ regular & ½ decaf coffee, still enjoyed chocolate throughout pregnancy
- was a challenge to get motivated

2nd trimester

- high energy levels
- went for lots of walks
- taking care of a one-and-a-half-year-old

3rd trimester

- stopped lifting kettlebells at 35 weeks
- moderate energy, lower energy as I get closer to delivery date
- small frequent healthy meals (The last month I started drinking lots of milkshakes and eating snowballs trying to add some weight on the baby. He was a little guy, at 36 weeks he was weighing only four pounds. I had one month left to try and fatten him up!)

I was amazed by how good I felt after Jonathan was born. I felt much better after this delivery, compared to the first. I feel that because my body had already been through the process, my body was trained, so to speak, and knew exactly what to do and what to expect. Sure, I was a little sore but nothing like before. I was also lucky in that I did not have any tears this time either. Awesome delivery!

Baby #3

During pregnancy #3, things at home were busy. I was not only working full time, with two small children to attend to, and a husband to care for (my 3rd kid), but we also put our house on the market. Not too much time for workouts, but somehow, I did. I still thought of the same motivators as before, easier delivery and maintaining as much of my physical strength as possible. Even if my workouts were only 15 minutes, I did something. Little did I know this baby would have to come via C-section.

1st trimester

- moderate nausea- I was prescribed progesterone pills due to low levels, and history of miscarriage, the main side effect was nausea.
- drank maybe ½ the recommended amount of water throughout pregnancy
- drank one cup of regular coffee per day and enjoyed chocolate throughout pregnancy
- was motivated to exercise but was challenged by my busy schedule.

2nd trimester

- high energy levels
- played at park
- lots of walks
- taking care of four- and two-year-old
- staging and cleaning house for frequent showings

3rd trimester

- stopped lifting at 34 weeks
- moderate to low energy
- small frequent healthy meals
- packing and loading boxes, getting ready to move



This was a scheduled C-section due to the diagnosis of vasa previa. This was a very emotional time for me. However, I was thankful it was diagnosed early, as it carries a high rate of fetal death. I had heard of placenta previa but vasa previa was a new to me. Vasa previa is when all the vascular, or blood vessels are trapped between the fetus and the cervix, which is the opening of the birth canal. When natural labor begins, this can cause tearing of the blood vessels leading to rapid fetal hemorrhage and death. My doctor recommended I deliver at 36 weeks, so that is what I did.

I was nervous about having a C-section. And dreading the recovery processes, mainly because I like to stay busy and have a hard time asking for help. I had to wear an abdominal binder for about two months. Being a nurse, I know what can happen if your incision site gets infected or dehisce (opening of wound). I took good care of myself and listened to all the instructions that were given to me by the doctor. I wanted my body to properly heal and recover from this surgery.

My husband helped when he could but he was working most of the time so my mom filled in. She was the most helpful to have around. She would come over every spare moment she had. Helping me with the kids grocery shopping, cooking dinner and carrying the laundry up and down the steps.

I didn't realize just how much a C-section would impact my day-to-day life. If you know you are going to deliver this way, do yourself a favor and enlist help beforehand. I know how hard it is for some people to ask for help, but do your body a favor and ask! Focus on healing, and let someone else care for you, they want to.

Baby #4

As much as I love to workout, by week 21 I had to stop my workouts due to severe pelvic pain. I can only assume it was related to the fact that I was carrying two babies in my small body frame. I could not do much in the way of physical activity, even walking was painful. This was my toughest pregnancy ever. I wondered if this pain would ever go away. Would I have it forever? Why me? I lived with this pain for months, it was debilitating. Due to the lack of physical activity, I really had to be carefully about my weight gain. I love food, but didn't want to gain too much, I already know how hard it was to get off.

1st trimester

- Always tired
- No nausea
- Tried to drink extra water but had good days and bad throughout pregnancy
- Drank one cup regular coffee per day, sometimes two cups if I was working throughout pregnancy
- Was so excited about this pregnancy and was happy to exercise and hopeful to get my shape back afterwards. Just like I had done the three times before.

2nd trimester

- moderate energy levels
- stopped lifting kettlebells at 21 weeks
- shorts walks
- taking care of seven, five and three-year-old

3rd trimester

- no lifting or exercise of any kind
- taking care of my husband and three children
- had to stop work at 27 weeks
- small frequent healthy meals



I am proud to say both babies came naturally, no C-section was needed. How exciting this was for me. Because of the delivery having to take place in an operating room on a hard-operating room table, I was extremely sore afterwards, mainly in my low back and buttocks area. It took me a few days to realize just how jacked up my body was. With all that was happening, between the kids at home, and taking care of the twins and what they needed, I was not thinking about myself. I was only surviving.

3. Overall Experience:

The good news is exercising did helped me pre-pregnancy, during pregnancy and post pregnancy. Throughout all my pregnancies, I was never diagnosed with gestational diabetes nor had high blood pressure. And thankfully I never had the diagnosis of postpartum depression. Sure, I had some crazy mood swings after giving birth but I think all moms do. You are not alone. As a new mom, there is a lot to take in. You now must be giving of yourself and your time, you have a little person that needs you 24/7. That is a huge life changer, and an exciting one too.

With all the pregnancy hormones still raging through your body and your body trying to regain that hormonal balance after delivery, you need an outlet. That outlet for me has always been exercise. I did my best to eat healthy and stay on target with optimal weight gain for all my pregnancies. And happy to say, I always stayed in the normal range for the doctors recommend weight gain. I had awesome deliveries too. I feel that maintaining my physical strength throughout my pregnancies helped me with the pushing and the endurance I needed to squeeze these babies out. All my natural deliveries went well. Active labor lasting anywhere from 45 minutes to 90 minutes. I even had a vaginal delivery after a C-section, which depending on your doctor, they may or may not recommend. Personally, I would take a natural birth over a C-section any day.

I was lucky to be able to exercise throughout my first three pregnancies. I also got to experience the other end of the spectrum, not working out. If this happens to you, don't give up hope. You will be able to have your comeback, it just takes time. For someone as active as I am it was difficult to be sedentary. But I had no choice in the matter, the pain put me in my place. Thinking ahead, I knew it was going to be hard for me physically after delivery. I mean there were two babies in my belly and I was

as big as a house. Way bigger than with any of my singletons. Funny word, right? Singletons was a term used at the multiples clinic by the staff, it always made me laugh.

After the birth of three singletons, I was back to my pre-pregnancy weight before the one-year mark. I had an extra ten pounds that was the hardest thing ever to get rid of. But I got those extra pounds off and was even able to fit into my favorite pair of pre-pregnancy jeans. After the birth of the twins, I had an extra 20 pounds that I just couldn't get off. This extra weight took me a lot longer to get rid of. My goal was on their second birthday I would be back to my weight but it just didn't happen. I am pleased to say, I was able to get ten of those pounds off but I feel my body composition has forever changed after the twins. I tried to get into those favorite pre-pregnancy jeans but it's just not happening. My hips have changed forever! Even if I get back to my pre-pregnancy weight, my bones, more like my hips, will never be as small as they were prior to getting pregnant. I'm okay with my body changes. I am happy to say that I am feeling healthy and strong once again. Momma's looking good!

One more thing I'd like to mention, even though I feel great now, I have my days when the aching back starts up again. I've come to realize that my back will always be an ongoing issue. Just like anyone else with old injuries, sometimes those injuries flair up and you need to tend to them. Listening to my body is the key to my training. When I start to feel my back aching again, I try to train muscle groups that assist the back like my abdominal muscles. If I need to I take a break from exercising all together, this could be a couple of day or even weeks. I rehab at home using ice packs and/or heating pads, massage and trigger point therapy. Dan gives great massages and we have a few trigger point books that we often refer too. I also use a theracane and a lacrosse ball to massage myself. Or better yet, tape two lacrosse balls together, this is called a peanut, it works great for trigger point therapy. It's a little less intense than just one lacrosse ball. Give it a try. I rehab myself at home, usually on the living room floor. It's the cheaper simpler way, and feels good too.

As I grow older, I feel more comfortable and confident in my own skin. When I think back to that high school girl, who wore a size two, I can't even imagine myself looking like that. Nor do I wish to be that small again. I have a strong, slender physique with lots of curves and yes, I have stretch marks and cellulite too. I also have five healthy, beautiful children that I wouldn't trade for anything! I am so blessed.



Kettlebell training has helped me achieve my goals as a woman and a mother. Allowing me to work out in the comfort of my own home. I can also be selective in terms of how hard I want to train or how easy I want to train, based on my personal needs. I am so happy I found kettlebells. I thoroughly enjoy using them, best workouts ever!

Getting back into the groove plus 1 (or 2 or 3 or 4 or 5)

I couldn't wait to get moving again. You can kiss sleep goodbye at this point, nap when they nap or don't. I know you have a list of household chores to get done, too. Trust me with seven people under one roof, the laundry NEVER stops! However, I love spending a little time for myself and get my training on.

The first thing I did after all my deliveries was walk. Depending on which delivery, I started the day after giving birth. I would walk the hallways on the postpartum unit. Yes, I know that sounds crazy and funny but I believe in the power of movement. Plus, I have a hard time sitting still. I would get funny looks from the nursing staff too, but after a few rounds and days, they got used to it.

Walking at the hospital was a great way for me to not only get my body moving but also was a great mood lifter. Right after delivery I just wanted to sleep for like 12 hours. Delivering a baby was the biggest marathon my body has ever been through (especially with the twins). The

crazy thing is you can't sleep after delivering a baby. Welcome to motherhood, you are now a mother and your baby needs you. So, no recouping, recharging, or getting the proper rest you need. With all that said, I was filled with pure joy at the marvelous miracle that occurred and it didn't matter that I was completely exhausted.

Walking was my road to recovery, so to speak. After proper recovery time, which differed after each baby, I was focused on getting back to shape. Weather permitting, the baby and I would take walks around the neighborhood, sometimes twice a day. I started with the jogging BOB stroller. After baby number two came, I pushed the oldest in the stroller and carried the baby in a front carrier. When the 3rd child arrived, I had one walking, one in the stroller and the baby in the front carrier. After the 4th pregnancy I traded in the BOB stroller and bought a double sit' n' stand stroller. Pushing three (sometimes four) kids on this huge stroller. This was quite a task!



Sunshine and fresh air is also good for you and your baby. Vitamin D does come from the sun you know. Some of the many great benefits of vitamin D are preserving healthy bones and teeth and promoting brain function. It's refreshing to get out of the house and simply walk around for a bit. Some women may develop postpartum depression, and getting out of the house and exercising will definitely help overcome and beat those feelings. Let's not forget exercise releases the natural feel good hormones.

Section 7 – A Memoir: *Delivery Room Dramas*

1st pregnancy 2006-2007

Baby #1

Dan and I had been married for almost three years now. Both recent college graduates, working in our new field for roughly a year. Looking towards the future, we started talking about having a baby. I was so looking forward to getting pregnant and starting our family. I had all these doubts in my mind about not being able to get pregnant? How long would it take? What if it takes two years? What if I had been on the pill too long and messed up my chances? My mind racing about all these doubts and we hadn't even started trying yet. I tried to tell myself to just relax and not think about it.

After a couple of months trying, I took a pregnancy test and saw that POS sign. Yippy! I was thrilled. I called the doctor right away to set up my first prenatal appointment.

This was my perfect pregnancy. I felt great! I gained a total of 30 pounds during this pregnancy. I never experienced the swollen ankles or fingers. I was very happy with everything... then my due date came and went. I thought with each day passing, when is this baby going to come out! I am so tired of being pregnant.

One-week past, I googled how to induce labor. HA! I tried most everything. Eating spicy foods, having sex, long walks and rubbing acupressure points. The only thing I didn't try was castor oil. Gross! Another week past, ug! I could not stop wondering if this child was ever going to come out. Finally, I talked with my doctor about being induced and we scheduled an induction.

It was early one Friday morning, Dan and I got up, grabbed my overnight bag, and off we went to the hospital. When we arrived, I was checked in by the registrar and then taken back to my room. I got into my hospital gown and took one last trip to the bathroom before I was given an IV and hooked up to IV fluids. Then the Pitocin was started.

This was the second grandchild on my side of the family and the first on Dan's side, so we had a room full of visitors starting around noon. After a few hours, still having no real contractions, Dan and my mom decided to go

for some coffee, leaving only my mother-in-law with me. It wasn't five minutes after they left, the contraction hit me hard and all at once. Oh my gosh, what pain! I went from lying down to sitting up, leaning into my mom-in-law and squeezing her hands. I pushed my call bell as fast as I could. A small raspy voice responding, "can I help you?"

I was trying to be as pleasant as possible responding with, "can you tell my nurse I need that epidural now!"

Shortly after my request, my nurse came into assess me. She assured me the anesthesiologist was finishing up with another patient then he would be in to see me. Still grasping my mom-in-law's hands, in excruciating pain, my mind wondered...Where is Dan? Why isn't he back yet? How long does it take to get coffee? Was this all really going to take place and he's nowhere to be found. I was feeling a wee bit mad. I wanted to feel the comfort of his loving arms holding me, rubbing my back, and telling me 'it's going to be okay'. But no, he was nowhere in sight, and I was in too much pain to talk about having him paged.

After a short period of time, the anesthesiologist came in pushing a huge cart, accompanied by a couple of nurses. Everything started happening all at once. It felt like I was in a whirlwind, things were moving all around me and I was just sitting there, unable to do much but watch and listen. Like a play being performed for the hundredth time, the nurses came in, cleared off my bed, and put me into position. Still sitting up with my back hunched over, legs hanging off the bed, I was being held up by my mom-in-law. I could see the cart more clearly now, filled with big long needles, sterile epidural kits, tubing and medicine bags. I had to stop looking. I was beginning to psych myself out. How was I going to do this? What was I thinking? Maybe this child can just stay in there forever. I no longer wanted to go through with this. I could see feet quickly moving, getting in place, as my head was tucked under. The nurses placed everything the doctor needed behind me. Being careful to keep everything sterile. As quickly as the procedure started, it was over. But ouch that hurt!

I was happy to be hooked up to the medicine that took away most of the pain. I lay back in the bed and in walks my mom and Dan. I was so thankful and happy to see them. Trying my best to relax in bed, I only kept wondering how much longer until delivery. With thoughts like, "how in the world was this baby going to come out? I was beginning to scare myself and cause undue stress. With each contraction, I had a window of pain. Rubbing just above my naval, I asked the nurse, "Why do I feel such pain only right

here?”

Her reply was not what I wanted to hear, “That can sometimes happen, it depends on how the epidural was inserted and the anatomy of your body. If the pain is too much the doctor could try and reinsert the catheter. But there is no guarantee that this will not happen again”.

No way, I’m not going through that again. It hurt. I could deal with this minor inconvenience.

Active labor began around 6pm and that's when the pushing began. I had a student nurse that day. Feeling happy and relaxed on drugs, her teacher came into my room, and asked, “Would you mind if my students came into observe you during your delivery? You are the only mom on the floor going into labor.”

Having once been in nursing school, I remembered my experiences and I replied, “Sure, they can watch.” She opened the door to my room and in walks a small herd of students. Next, the newborn nurse enters with her student nurse and began setting up the baby’s warmer. I could only smile, half because of the drugs and the other half because I am usually such a modest person but look at me now. I had heard that during delivery whatever modesty you have up and leaves, I just didn’t really believe it until now.

I pushed for roughly 15 minutes when the doctor asked, “would you like a mirror set up so you can see? It helps some women focus on where to push.”

What the heck, was she serious? “Sure”, I said, “I’ll try it”. I can’t say whether it helped or not, but oh my! There was a lot going on down there!

I continued pushing, half wincing at the mirror, and after for about 35 minutes, out she came. The most beautiful baby girl with a healthy set of lungs on her. I was so excited and overwhelmed by the absolute miracle of birth as the doctor and the team of nurses took over putting me back together. I was oblivious to everything else going on around me; all I saw was this beautiful baby that God had blessed me with.

Did I mention the quick change of nurses, as shift change was taking place right in the middle of the delivery. I quickly thanked my day shift nurse and was introduced to the night shift nurse who would be taking over.

I had a few minutes to hold her and try to breastfeed, before the newborn nurse took her away to be cleaned up and assessed. All the while I was being assessed and sutured up. My doctor congratulated me and began explaining what she was doing. I had an internal tear that needed to

be stitched up and a cyst she saw that she was going to remove. As she finished up, I laid my head back, looking up at Dan. He had one arm draped over the top of the pillow above my head and the other hand holding mine, he leaned his face toward me saying, “you did such a great job hon”, then continued in and kissed me. I was totally wiped out but looking forward to a big meal and then getting some rest. Overall this was one awesome experience.



2nd pregnancy 2008

Miscarriage

Surprised and thrilled. Dan and I soon found out we were expecting baby #2.

It was a sunny brisk day in March, I was watching my nephew for a few hours one afternoon. The kids were playing in the front yard and running up and down the sidewalk in front of our townhouse. I was thrilled that we were able to get outside. We walked around the block a few times, played bubbles and sidewalk chalk on the front walkway. I was sitting on the front step when out of nowhere a sharp pain erupted. I leaned forward

slightly, grabbing my abdomen and began pursed lipped breathing. Trying to rid my body of this painful feeling.

At that instant, all my thoughts of the new baby were troubled. We had just found out, unexpectedly, that we were pregnant again. Dan and I were thrilled to be welcoming another baby. I had my first doctor's appointment at six weeks, and was given the referral to get an ultrasound between eight to ten weeks' gestation to hear the fetal heartbeat. My appointment was set up for the following week.

Then, as fast it came, it was gone. I was hoping that it was just gas, but I couldn't stop my mind from wandering. It came again more intense this time. I clinched my stomach and slumped over. Trying to steady my breathing. Wishing and praying the pain away. Hoping for all to be okay with this new baby. After a few long seconds, the pain subsided.

Still sitting on the front step, I see Dan's car pull up. He parked, came up the walkway grabbing our little girl up into his arms hugging and kissing her playfully, then continuing towards me. He leaned over and kissed me. "Hey babe! How was your day?" He asked.

"Fine", I replied.

He put Andrea back down on the front walk, said "Hi" to our nephew, then proceeded to walk into the house. I followed behind him.

"Can you stay outside with the kids a few minutes?" I asked.

"Sure babe", he answered.

Watching the three of them out the front window, I sat down on the couch. Waiting, hoping, praying that everything was okay. I had never experienced a pain like this. Why was I having it? Was I having a miscarriage? The pain came again, this time it lingered on, not as intense but still there. I laid on the couch, in shock and disbelief. Tears filling my eyes.

After a few long minutes, Dan looked in through the front screen door and asked, "what's wrong?" It took me a couple of seconds to begin. Then a few mumbles came out, along with some tears. He could tell something was wrong and began walking in the front door. He came over to me and embraced me in his arms. Nothing is better than a strong solid hug that lets you know someone cares, loves you, and supports you. I began explaining the pain I had experienced and he tried to comfort me with kind words and more hugs.

He went back outside to watch the kids, and I went upstairs. I went into the bathroom to check for any bleeding, but found none. Next, I called my doctor. It was after office hours by now, so I left a message and she called me back within the hour. I described to her what all was going on with me. Then I heard that dreadful word no woman ever wants to hear...Miscarriage. She asked if I had scheduled my ultrasound yet? "Yes, I have it scheduled for next week," I replied.

"Good," she began, "keep it. That way we can see what's going on."

The next few days of waiting were the hardest. Not knowing. Worrying. Wondering if I did something wrong. At the ultrasound, the technician confirmed that there was a fetus but no heartbeat. The tears came flowing down. My worst fear had happened. I was a little over eight weeks and miscarried. I thought, "What did I do? "How could this happen to me?" I was completely devastated and depressed.

I began isolating myself more and more. Random thoughts flashing in my mind. Tears would come at the craziest times. The loss almost consumed me. I had to pull my thoughts up and get out of this pit. Through my own prayers and the prayers of others, I slowly got back to my normal self (well, as normal as normal is for me, ha-ha!). Happiness once again filled my heart. I started focusing on the blessing I had in my life, and the gray cloud finally lifted.

Another thing that really helped me get past this was not just family support, but all my friends and co-workers who had come forward, opened their hearts to me and told me about their miscarriage. It happens to more women than you know. For no particular reason, it just happens. It took me a few weeks of feeling sad and depressed, but I got through it. And now I share my story, in hopes that it will help someone else who has suffered a loss like I did.

3rd pregnancy 2008-2009

Baby #2

It was early January when I found out I was pregnant again. I was filled with such joy. Of course, I had the thoughts of another miscarriage in the back of my mind, but I prayed and trusted that this pregnancy would be okay. The first few months went by so fast, I could hardly believe it. On May 5th, I had the anatomy sonogram done. I was super excited when we found out we were going to have a boy. How wonderful!

My next prenatal checkup was on May 12th. I remember lying on the exam table, belly exposed listening as the doctor slowly moved the Doppler over my small belly. I heard lots of static and popping sounds, then out of nowhere that marvelous sweet sound, the heartbeat. Yea! After the miscarriage, I was overjoyed to hear that sound. The doctor then began to tell me, "I think I am hearing a heart arrhythmia. Listen here." She placed the Doppler right over the baby's heart and whooshing sounds sang out. I am no expert at listening to fetal heartbeat abnormalities, so I just took her word for it. My heart dropped.

Saddened by this I asked, "What do we do next?" She sent me home with a referral to get another ultrasound. This ultrasound is called a fetal echocardiogram and is specifically done to evaluate the unborn child's heart function and anatomy. In my case, listening for any abnormal fetal heart rhythms. I was given instructions to not do anything that would increase my heartrate.

"No working out and no caffeine," the doctor added. I did exactly what she instructed. I didn't want to risk anything.

I scheduled the fetal echocardiogram for May 20th. In the waiting room, I sat. I was so nervous. My palms were sweating. A woman opened the door next to the front desk and called out, "Cenidoza." Following behind her, I went in and laid down on the exam room table. I began pulling my shirt up and lowered my pants just enough to expose my baby bump, then quietly waited for the technician to begin. She sat down next to me, grabbed the gel and proceeded to squeeze it onto my belly. Then grabbing the transducer probe we started the ultrasound. She took many pictures, recorded sounds, and whatever else they do.

I couldn't carry on much of a conversation as my mind was racing and I was continuously praying that everything would be alright. After what felt like forever, she looked at me and said, "I'm going to have to show this to the doctor, but I don't hear any abnormality, everything sounds fine." There was a huge sigh of relief. Thank you, God! I was so happy!

With all that had just happened, I decided to ease back into my workouts. I started back with lighter weights and made sure I monitored my heart rate, keeping it under 130 beats per minute. I gradually increased my weights and elevated my heart rate to around 140 beats per minute over the next couple of weeks.

The next few prenatal checkups went well. My belly was measuring on time and I was gaining the right amount of weight. My blood work was good. Everything seemed to be going well.

My next ultrasound was due at 36 weeks (not all doctors do an ultrasound now, but mine does). During this ultrasound, they found baby boy to be lower than average in weight but his bone measurements were within normal range. A mix of happy and sad feeling flooded over me.

Once the doctor had a chance to read the results, she called me on the phone and asked if I can go in twice a week for non-stress tests, to monitor the baby. Of course, I said yes. I asked her to explain what this meant, but I was too upset to really listen or grasp an understanding. I got off the phone and just sobbed.

Once I got myself together and updated Dan and my mom, I reached out to a few friends that had been through this testing. I was gratefully assured that it was no big deal. A non-stress test simply monitors the baby's heartbeat in response to movements and/or contractions for approximately 20-30 minutes. This is done to make sure the baby's heart rate responds properly for a natural delivery.

I reminded myself that this was all for the safety of the baby and myself. With all that was going on, I decided to stop my kettlebell training. I was between 36-37 weeks.

I continued with the non-stress tests over the next couple of weeks, along with my prenatal visits. Everything was going well and baby boy's heart seemed to be doing actually what they wanted to see. Thanks be to God.

It was September 9th, a few days before my due date, I was kneeling trying to put on Andrea's shoe's when I felt water going down my leg. I stopped dead in my tracks, "What was that?" I thought to myself. I slowly got up, more wetness began flowing down my leg. "Oh my, I think my water just broke", I said out loud. I walked up the stairs quickly, got to the bathroom, grabbed a pad and went to change my pants.

After getting cleaned up, I called Dan. It was a little after 3pm, I couldn't believe how fast he got home. I was in the middle of packing my overnight bag for the hospital. He was giving me a lecture on why I didn't already have it packed and how I shouldn't be walking up and down the stairs. With the roll of my eyes, I just continued what I was doing. It didn't take too long. Dan grabbed my bag and little girl and the three of us loaded into the car and headed off to the hospital.

We arrived on the labor and delivery unit. In the triage room, I had to be checked to confirm that it was my water that broke and not just pee. I had to laugh at that one, but the nurse told me, “You would be surprised at the number of women who accidentally peed themselves and thought it was their water.” I just smiled. It was confirmed, my water broke. I was now being moved to a room on the floor.

Over the next five to six hours, I had a few contractions. I had IV fluids running and my epidural was hooked up around 8pm. By 10pm, the doctor started Pitocin, trying to bring on more contractions. It worked. The pain was gradually increasing and the squeezing was getting more intense. I asked the nurse for more pain medication. As they were increasing my epidural medication, I suddenly felt ill. Super dizzy, head spinning, feeling like I’m about to pass out, I laid my head down and closed my eyes. I hear the nurse call out an extremely low blood pressure, and just lay still, trying to steady myself. With all a blur, active labor was beginning, it was right around midnight. After about nine big pushes, Jonathan, our healthy baby boy was born.

With all the excitement and hype of the new baby, I vaguely remember hearing the doctor saying, “there was a knot in the umbilical cord”.

What? I thought, but it didn’t matter he was already born and very healthy. What ever could have happened didn’t and for that I am thankfuly.



4th pregnancy 2011-2012

Baby #3

Dan and I were very surprised to be pregnant again! He wanted to wait, probably indefinitely, but I was very happy. Shocked, yes, but super excited. I always wanted a big family. I used to say, "I would love to have 4 or 5 kids." With the first two close together, I thought, "Why not? Might as well just keep going."

After my first doctor's appointment, she sent me to get blood work done. I wasn't real sure why so early. I didn't remember getting blood drawn this early before. "What's this blood work for?" I asked.

"To find out where your pregnancy levels are", she replied. She continued by saying, "because you miscarried before I want to check your progesterone levels. Sometimes, having low levels of progesterone can be the reason behind a miscarriage."

Wow, I did not know this. "Sure thing", I replied. Feeling some anxiety, I went right over to the lab to get my blood work done.

On my next prenatal visit, my doctor informed me that my progesterone levels were low. She wanted to prescribe me a progesterone pill to take, to help raise my levels. I am not a fan of pills of any sort, so I asked a couple of questions. However, I knew the answers before I even asked them. I would do anything to better the chances of keeping this child. So, it really didn't matter what the answers were. I left with the prescription in hand and went to get it filled.

The next day, I started the progesterone pills. I wasn't crazy to be on them, but now because of them, I was feeling very nauseated. Yuck! This sucks. I stuck it out and after three months I was able to stop taking them. Yippee! That was a wonderful day.

Going into my second trimester everything was going well. My home life was super busy. I was still working full time at the hospital. I had a four-year-old and a two-year-old to run around after. On top of that, Dan and I decided to move.

Our house was on the market for three months, which was the worst. With every showing, we had to hide stuff and clean up. This is a very difficult thing when you have little ones. We finally got an offer and found a beautiful house. Things were looking up. Everything seemed to be falling into place. Our settlement date was set up for February 16th.

Dan and Jonathan accompanied me to my 32-week ultrasound. We all walked back into the ultrasound room and waited for the sonographer to

begin. She started doing her thing, scanning, measuring, and taking screenshots. It seemed like it was taking a long time. Jonathan started getting antsy. Dan asked, "Do you care if I take him out to the waiting area?"

"No, go ahead," I said.

The sonographer continued scanning for a little while longer. Wow, I thought. "Everything look okay?" I asked.

Not really answering my question, she replied with, "I'm just measuring a few more things, then I will take my findings to the radiologist." What? They never did that before, well, at least while I was still in the room. My anxiety started creeping in. I just laid back, and took a couple deep breaths. A few minutes later, the sonographer left the room.

While I lay there, mind racing, heart beating faster and faster, I wasn't sure what to expect. There was a quick knock at the door before it opened. In walks the radiologist and the sonographer. The radiologist grabbed the chair next to me, sat down, and introduced himself. He began by saying, "What we are seeing is that all the vasculature for the baby is directly in front of your cervix."

All I'm thinking is... What? What are you talking about? I am not understanding the importance of this finding. I'm sure the expression on my face said it all though. He continued, "You have two placentas, one anterior, in the front of your uterus and one posterior, the back of the uterus. You may have had a vanishing twin but we cannot be sure. However, the anterior placenta connects to the posterior placenta with all the vasculature connecting in front of your cervix, this is known a vasa previa."

Wow, what did I just hear. This is crazy. I am still not sure even how to respond. The words creep out of my mouth, "so what happens now?"

"You will need to schedule to have a C-section at about 36 weeks. I will talk to your doctor about the findings. You will need to call your doctor about setting up a date for the C-section." I don't remember what happened next. But somehow, I made it out to the waiting room.

I found Dan and Jonathan in the hallway, right outside the waiting area. I joined them on the bench. Dan, looked at me and the tears began to fall. I couldn't hold them back any longer. "What's wrong?" he asked. No words came out, just more tears. He tried again, "What happened in there?"

I started to speak, "I don't even really know.... Something about vasculature in front of my cervix, and I have to have a C-section. I also need to deliver at 36 weeks. I don't want to have a C-section." More tears ran down my face. Dan grabbed hold of me and drew me closer to him.

Embracing me in his loving arms.

He asked, "Is the baby alright?"

"Yes, she's fine. The doctor said if I go into labor naturally, it will put the baby and myself at high risk for death," I said.

Looking at me, he comfortingly stated, "See, everything's still okay. You and the baby are fine. The doctor knows what she's doing, I'm sure they do C-sections all the time."

"Yes, I know. I'm just scared to have it done," I answered.

Before we even left the hospital, I was on the phone with my doctor scheduling my C-section. The date was planned for February 3rd. Oh no, I thought, what about settlement? There was nothing I could do about it. The doctor was adamant that I couldn't go past 36 weeks. She did not want to risk me going into labor naturally.

Because of these new findings, Dan was on the phone with the realtor trying to get settlement pushed up. Thankfully, settlement was moved to February 1st. We began packing and loading boxes, preparing for the move. I was eight months pregnant. This was quite a task.

Sold our first home and bought our new home on the first for February, started cleaning and moving boxes into the new house on the second. Then on February 3rd, bright and early we were off to the hospital to welcome our new baby. Due to our new location, we got lost trying to get there. Dan says it was a detour though. Yeah right.

Once we arrived at the hospital I was taken up to the labor and delivery unit. The nurses came in and took me back into the operating room to get me prepped for the surgery. They also talked to me briefly about the possibility of the baby needing extra support after delivery. With so much going on in my head, I tried to listen but the words seemed to be going in one ear and right out the other. I simply nodded my head like I knew what was going on.

Lying on the operating room table, talking to my doctors, I felt so anxious. Dan was being prepped to join me and I was waiting for him to enter. The doors opened and he was dressed in all blue, even the covering

over his shoes were blue. His face covered with a blue mask and a blue cap on his head, he sat down beside me. I reach my hand to him and he embraced it. He tried to ease my stress by his joking and playful chatter. Even though he was making me chuckle, beneath I was almost in a panic.

The doctors finished prepping my abdomen and then the nurses started putting up the barrier sheet so I couldn't see the procedure. I could feel tugging and pulling but no pain was associated with it. The anesthesiologist was behind my head at the top of the table asking me to "calm down and take some deep breaths, you're doing great." He then placed an oxygen mask over my face.

"I can't breathe!" I snapped at him. Pulling the mask off my face, my anxiety was taking over.

"You need to keep this on, it's giving you extra oxygen to help you breathe," he said calmly.

"No, it's making me feel claustrophobic," I snapped back again. Ripping it off my face.

Then his voice came out very stern, "if you don't leave this on I will have to restrain your arms." Fine, I thought but couldn't say anything.

Dan then began to saying things like, "It will be alright." "You're doing great." "It's almost over." I wanted to smack him and the anesthesiologist.

Next thing I heard was the baby crying. Wow! That took my mind off everything else going on around me. That sweet baby cry meant she was okay. The nurses cleaned her up a little and brought her close to my face, so I could see her.



She was beautiful. Tears of joy began streaming down my face. They took her back to the baby warmer to finished cleaning her up and completing her newborn assessment. My doctors started putting me back together. A huge relief passed over me, just knowing that she came out healthy and it was almost all over.

I opted to stay in the hospital for five days. I really enjoyed the extra help the nurses and nursing assistant gave me. With all the added help, it was easier to manage with all the strict guidelines to follow having a C-section. But on the home front, Dan was trying to finish up moving us into our new house. He wanted everything to be set up before I came home because we both knew I would be stubborn as a mule and try to do things myself regardless of how sore I felt.

He and the other children were bunking at my parents' house until I came home. Our first night in the new house was great. And to my surprise Dan had enlisted the help of about 40 of our friends and family to help move us into the new house. All the dishes and clothes were put away. The kid's beds were all put together. There was even some food in the pantry and refrigerator. How blessed we are.



5th pregnancy 2013-2014

Baby #4 and #5

It was the morning of my 33rd birthday when I received the best gift of all, a positive pregnancy test. I really wanted to have another baby. I always said I wanted four or five kids. Dan on the other hand, well I don't think he was quite ready. But... it happened. I was ecstatic and full of excitement. I figured with all this energy I would go for one of my early morning jogs, so I did.

I called my doctor's office to start my prenatal care again. My first doctor's visit went well. I left with a sonogram referral for viability to be taking between eight to ten weeks.

I had the hardest time hiding my pregnancy this time around. I was showing early. I thought this was because this was my fourth, well really fifth, pregnancy. Dan and I try to hold off on announcing the pregnancy until after the first trimester. After the miscarriage, we learned it's better to wait. But with my belly already popping out at six weeks, I could not really hide much.

Week eight arrived and I had scheduled my sonogram for an early morning. I figured I would go right after I got off work, that way I didn't have to take all the kids with me or find a sitter.

I was on the exam table, belly exposed and the sonographer began typing in my information. She asked, "What was the first day of your last period?"

"August 4th," I replied. She looked at me like I was crazy.

Sarcastically she asked, "Are you sure?" Why was she giving me the fifth degree, what's her problem, I thought?

Scornfully, I answered back, "Yes." With what seemed like a huff and puff, she squeezed the cool gel on my belly, picked up the transducer and began scanning.

I was a little taken back by her rudeness, but I was too tired to argue. I laid my head back on the pillow and just relaxed.

Seconds later I hear, "Oh wow! Now I understand why you are so big." Excuse me, I thought. There was a short pause then she continued saying, "you're having twins." Oh, my goodness! What?! Twins! My eyes widened and jaw dropped. She began, "Look here," pointing at the screen, "here is baby A and down here is baby B."

Both hands now covering my eyes, softly the words "Oh wow", came out of my mouth.

“Do twins run in your family?” she asked.

“No, I don’t think so,” I replied. “My husband is never going to believe me.”

“Oh, don’t worry about that, I’ll give you a picture he can’t refuse,” she stated. I had a smile on my face from ear to ear. I always wanted twins, even prayed for them during my first and second pregnancies, but the thought never crossed my mind since then. I was overjoyed and feeling especially blessed.

I couldn’t stop smiling on my way home. Exploding into short bursts of laughter by myself in the car. I really wanted to call Dan and tell him but I knew he wouldn’t believe me. The whole ride home I thought of ways I could surprise him with the good news.

When I finally arrived home, I saw Dan and the kids all waiting at the bus stop. Oh good, I thought, now I can tell everyone at the same time. I pulled into the driveway, got out of the car, still with a huge grin on my face and handed Dan the sonogram picture. “What’s this?” he asked.

“My sonogram picture, just look,” I said.

He stood there for a long time just staring at it. The kids must have felt the anticipation because they began yelling out, “What’s that? What is it Daddy?”

Confused, he looked up at me and asked, “Why does it say baby A and baby B?”

Still smiling, I answered, “Because we are having two babies.”

“What? Is this a joke? How did you make this?” he asked. I found it funny that he thought I had time to stop off and create my own sonogram.

“No joke, Honey. We are going to have twins,” I said.



The kids were looking back and forth at Dan and me. I knelt down, started hugging them and began explaining that, “mom is going to have two babies.”

“Really two babies’ mom?” Andrea asked.

“Yes, sweetie two babies. Can you believe it?” I replied. She was jumping around sharing her excitement with us. The younger two children still trying to process what was going on.

I looked over towards Dan. “You okay?” I asked.

“Yeah.... two babies.... Twins....” he was mumbling. His breathing was heavy. Going from standing to bending over with hands on knees, this little motion went on a couple of times accompanied by the mumbling. I thought it was kind of amusing. After he finally settled down and stopped his theatricals, he took in a deep breath and on exhale said, “Okay.”

Weeks went by, the excitement of twins still fresh on my mind. I was so joyfully and excited, two babies.... Wow! It was almost as if I didn’t believe it. I started thinking, how could I handle this? Handle twins with three other children? The thought would overwhelm me at times. I would retreat to my prayers, and think “God wouldn’t bless me with something I couldn’t handle. With God by my side anything is possible.” So many times, I repeated that saying.

During this time, my medical insurance changed at work. I could stay with my OB doctor, who delivered my other three children, and pay a co-pay or go to a Hopkins doctor and not have any co-pays. That was a stressful decision. We didn’t have the money to pay for all the possible medical expenses. But I was comfortable with my doctor, I really liked her, she’s great! After a lot of debating, we decided I would switch over to the Hopkins doctors, so we didn’t go in debt.

It ended up being a good change. I was followed by a group of doctors who specialized in multiples. They had all the latest technology for monitoring twins and tons of experience delivering twins. They also were supportive in the fact that I wanted to have a natural delivery. That was encouraging.

Around 20 weeks, Dan took me to my ultrasound appointment for the anatomy check. We were both hoping for another boy, at least one. The sonographer took us back into the room, as I got myself ready on the table; Dan took his seat next to me. Both facing the computer screen with great anticipation. The sonographer took a long time measuring baby A, then

more time measuring baby B. Then she looked at us and asked, “Would you like to know what you’re having?”

“Yes,” we replied in unison.

“Well, Baby A is a girl,” we both took in a breath and held it as she began again, “and Baby B is a girl, too.” A sighing exhale came out simultaneously, we both felt a little disappointed. No matter, the best thing of all was both girls were healthy! And that’s really all that matters.

Once we got out to the car, we called my parents to make the announcement. They were watching the other children. My mother picked up the phone and repeated, “two girls.”

Next thing I heard was Jonathan in the background shouting, “NO! Not more girls! I wanted a boy!” I could hear the tears beginning over the phone. Again, his faint voice calling out, “the next set of twins are going to be boys.” HA! Yeah, right. I had to get off the phone kind of quick because my mom had to go console him. Poor kid, the only boy! Four sisters. I could only imagine what our house would be like over the next few years.

I had been experiencing mild discomfort in my pelvic area but didn’t really think too much about it. However, over the next few weeks the pain was getting worse. Whenever I had the chance, I would sit down and put my feet up. But that didn’t seem to help much.

Dan was hosting an open house at our gym on New Year's Eve. I was looking forward to going this year, especially because I finally had a new year’s off work. It was during my work out that I noticed the pain was getting worse. I felt more pressure in my pelvic bones and the pain wasn’t letting up. I stopped my work out immediately and sat down. I knew this was something that just wasn’t going to go away anytime soon.

At my next appointment, I told my doctor about the pelvic bone pain I was having. I explained that nothing seemed to make it better and the simplest of movements like sitting down, going up or down steps or even changing positions in bed caused the pain to increase. She completed her assessment and had me do a few movements to see what, if anything was triggering the pain. Then she proceeded to explain something called pregnancy-related pelvic girdle pain (PPGP), also known as symphysis pubis dysfunction (SPD). It’s just something that can happen during pregnancy. She assured me that after the pregnancy it would go away. I wasn’t sure that I really believed her, but I sure wanted to.

I was nearing the end of my second trimester, when I was getting too uncomfortable, more like miserable. I was experiencing Braxton hick’s

contractions several times a day. My belly would get so tight, causing slight pain. Working was getting terribly hard too, mainly due to all the walking. I would sit in the charge nurse office with ice packs on my crotch. It was so embarrassing. I would pray that nobody would see me or the ice pack. After a few weeks of this, I took my maternity leave. I was 26 weeks pregnant.

Feeling scared about leaving work too early. Not sure how long I would receive a paycheck. I knew I didn't have much PTO (paid time off) saved up but there was no other way. Dan and I agreed this was the best. Thankfully, we had some money put away to help us get through these next few months.

My routine changed over these next few weeks. My oldest was the only one in school, so Monday through Friday we would all walk her down to the bus stop. Then walk back home, play inside because it was too cold outside. I would sit in the recliner, most of the day. Still using ice packs to numb the pain. Breanna would take her nap after lunch. And Jonathan and I would curl up together in the recliner and watch a movie. Most of the time we both ended up falling asleep. That was the best. By then it was time to go back down and wait for the bus to bring Andrea home.



As the weeks went by I got bigger and bigger. It was hard just getting in and out of our van. Thankfully my father-in-law would watch the two younger children while I went to all my doctor's appointments. I was half way into my third trimester by now.

I went in for another prenatal appointment on March 26, 2014. One of the differences between a singleton checkup and a multiples checkup was that the doctors always checked fetal heart beats with a small portable sonogram machine. This is to insure they hear both babies' heartbeats. The doctors also check other things like fetal position and amniotic fluid. This was not anything unusual but this time, the doctor went to get a colleague to double check her findings. I was getting a bit nervous. The staff was very helpful though, explaining to me everything they were seeing.

Baby A's amniotic fluid was extremely low, so low in fact that I was being admitted to the hospital. The doctors needed to be sure that my water hadn't broken. I was so upset. Concerned about the twin's health and my children at home. Who was going to take care of them? Dan has a business to run. How would everyone manage without me? Plus, I had nothing with me. I never packed my overnight because I never expected I'd go this early. I called Dan and he called both our parents to fill them in on the latest. He reassured me that all would be taken care of and thankfully everyone helped.

I was admitted to labor and delivery for further evaluation. IVs were started, labs drawn and a urine test to check for amniotic fluid. Thankfully, my water had not broken. However, baby A was at risk due to extremely low amount of amniotic fluid around her. The plan was for me to stay in the hospital and when I reach 34 weeks they would induce me. This was a shocker. I had such a mix of feelings. I was upset because they had to come so early. However, at the same time I was a bit relieved I didn't have to be pregnant much longer. I was moved to a private room on the mother baby unit. I had five more days till I would be exactly 34 weeks. I had a lot of visitors. They would bring me food, snacks, books and games. I even went to a mother's group meeting. This was a gathering of all the women on the unit waiting for delivery to occur. Just something to keep me busy. The only good thing was I had a few days of rest before giving birth. Dan would come visit me every night. The kids only came down once to see me. It was flu season and the hospital does not allow children under the age of 12 on the mother baby unit. But I was lucky enough to be wheeled down to a visiting area to visit with my kids. I was so happy to see them and they were excited

too. I was missing them dearly.

I was being closely monitored every day. I would have vitals every 4 hours, labs every morning and for an hour a day I was hooked up to the external fetal monitor. I also had several visits from my team of doctors explaining to me what the delivery plan was. They were going to induce me early Monday morning, no eating after midnight. I had to have an epidural because if the twins did not come down naturally, they would have to do a C-section. I also had to deliver in the operating room, as a precaution. Informing me that, I am at risk for both a natural delivery of one baby and having to have a C-section for the other. That would suck! I was also visited by a NICU (neonatal intensive care unit) doctor. She went over a few scenarios that could happen to the baby's due to their early delivery. I just prayed and trusted that God would take care of everything. I had a peace over me that I just cannot explain.

On March 30th, around 11pm, I started feeling some contractions. I sat for a while counting how long they were and how far apart. I started to feel a little uneasy. I pushed the call bell, "can you send my nurse in, I think I'm having contractions."

"Yes, she'll be right in," replied a woman's voice. A few minutes later, my nurse walks in. "Are you okay?" she asked.

"I think I'm having some contractions," I answered.

"Are you timing them?" she asked.

"Yes, they are coming about every 10 minutes, lasting only a few seconds, maybe 15-30. They vary," I stated.

"I'll be right back, I'm going to put you on the external fetal monitor and page the doctor."

A couple minutes later she wheeled in the monitor and began hooking me up. The nursing assistance took my vital signs. Shortly after, the nurse received a phone call and it was the doctor on-call. All I wanted to do was call Dan, I needed him with me. I was scared. Once she got off the phone, she explained to me that because I was to be induced in the morning, they were going to transfer me to labor and delivery tonight.

"I have to go call report, so it will be a few minutes before we move you," she added.

Then the nurse left the room and the nursing assistant packed what I wanted to take with me.

I went back and forth about calling Dan. It was the middle of the night, I knew he needed sleep and who would he get to watch the kids that late. I knew the babies would not be delivered anytime soon but I was nervous. I didn't care, he is my support. So, I made the call and told him to come up.

I had just gotten to my labor and delivery room, when Dan walked in. Oh good! I was relieved. My contractions had died down by now. It was about 1am, which meant I was now 34 weeks and I would be induced later that morning. They started prepping me early. I had IV fluids running, antibiotics, my Foley was inserted and the Pitocin drip begun. They even gave me my epidural early. I was numb for so long. Dan slept on and off. I tried but only managed a few cat naps. We had the TV on the whole time watching Marvel movie marathon, just trying to pass the time away.

It was a few hours before my contractions started up again. The time passing so slowly, 5am...6am...7am... Shift change. The nurses would come in and out checking me, increasing the Pitocin, or hang another bag of fluids. Hoping labor would come soon. I was getting so tired of waiting, ...8am...9am. Tossing and turning, trying to get comfortable. But with every turn I needed someone to help me adjust and fix my pillows. I was getting antsy. Hungry too. I just wanted to push these babies out already. What was taking so long! The doctors would come in from time to time to check how far I was dilated, 10am....11am...

Finally, a little after 11am, things started moving and active labor was about to begin. The staff wheeled me down to the operating room. As we rolled down the halls, I saw my mom standing there waving and sending her love. We rolled past a huge window, I was surprised to see snow on the roof top. Next, I was pushed into this huge metal room. Everyone was in blue scrubs, with shoe covering, masks and some had shields covering their eyes. There were so many people! Must have been about 30. There was a team of doctors and nurses for me, and a team of doctors and nurses for baby A and a team of doctors and nurses for baby B. I had never seen anything like it before.

They moved my legs into the stirrups and told me to start pushing. Dan was right by my side, helping me push with every contraction. It only took a handful of pushes and out popped Caitlyn, born at 11:57 am. She was the smallest at 4 pounds 5 ounces. She came out so fast. I heard her cry and felt some relief.

Her team of doctors quickly whisked her away to assess and evaluate her. After a few minutes, someone brought her over so I could see her, but only for a moment. She and her team of doctors left the O.R. to take her to the nursery for further assessment.

My cervix went from ten centimeters dilated back to six. OH NO! The doctor instructed the nurse to increase the Pitocin again. We were playing the waiting game again. After about 15 minutes, I asked if I could remove my legs from the stirrups while we waited. I was still so numb but I felt weird with my vagina all exposed and people just sitting around talking and shooting the breeze. Someone came over to help me lower my legs. That may have not been the thing to do because now I feel like I'm about to fall right off the table. Dan assured me that he would not let that happen.

The doctors kept coming over to check my cervix, to find out if I had dilated any further. The Pitocin drip was increased more. But after about 40 minutes, the doctor was getting worried about the possibility of having to delivery baby B via C-section.

My legs were put back into the stirrups and then the doctor began pushing, more like jumping, on my belly. She was explaining to me that she needed to move baby B down closer towards my cervix, trying to help the progression of delivery. I was screaming and grunting at this point. I never felt such pain. I knew she had to do her job, we both wanted to avoid a C-section at all costs.

Tears streaming down my face. Dan never looked so scared. The doctor still pushing hard against my stomach. A piercing cry came out from within, I couldn't hold back. The epidural was not doing anything, I felt everything! My cervix was now at eight centimeters dilated. The doctor began to say, "Alright everyone let's get ready." She turned looked directly at me and stated, "You're going to have to push now and with all you got! If we wait any longer the possibility of a C-section is getting higher."

Worry, fear and feelings of anxiety crept over me. I didn't care though, I just wanted healthy babies and did not want to be cut open. So, with each contraction that followed, all I heard was PUSH! I never pushed so hard and with such intensity in all my life. After about three pushes, the doctor began pushing on my belly again. I couldn't hold back, screams just burst out from within. Such agonizing pain. Tears continuously rolling down my face. Suddenly another contraction hit, and I heard "PUSH!" and so I did. With everything I had, I wrapped my arms tight around my thighs, and along with the pushing the bed began folding up on me. My low back, sacral

area was beginning to feel the pain. With every push, I could hear a clunking noise followed by the top of the table moving me way up like a recliner. Only thing was there was no bottom of the bed. My legs were in stirrups and the bottom of the bed removed so the baby could be delivered. With every contraction that followed this happened. It felt like I was slowly being pushed off the table. By this point even with the epidural, which I swear stopped working, I could feel the pain starting.

I tried to get someone to lock the bed but with the baby as priority it never happened. I kept pushing and screaming and crying then quick breath and begin again. Pushing, screaming and crying. The whole time the doctor was still pushing on my belly with all her might. Another doctor had taken her place at the foot of the bed, ready for the baby to come out. Finally, I heard, "I see the baby's head, keep pushing, you're doing great!" After about two more huge pushes, Cristyn was born at 1:18pm. What a relief! She was crying loudly, always a good sign. I couldn't stop crying. Although these tears were more joyful.

Not too long after the second delivery, the doctor was back on my belly again pushing as hard as she could. All the while trying to explain to me why she is causing me more pain and agony. "We need to make sure we get all the placenta out or you could hemorrhage," stated the doctor. It felt like she was jumping up and down on my deflated stomach. I just laid there crying uncontrollably. My tears of joy already back to tears of pain. Why me? Make this pain stop! I was so exhausted I didn't really care at this point. I let them do whatever they needed to do. After some time, I was transferred back to my bed and wheeled over to my old room on the mother baby unit. My low back and sacral area hurt so bad. I was so swollen and tender. I was more concerned about the girl's health, so I pushed through my pain until I could really care for myself. I needed multiple pillows just to sit on to feel some sort of comfort. Motrin was my friend, along with several ice packs to help decrease all that swelling. The extra pain relief items I needed for almost two months.



The girls did need some extra support. Cristyn, baby B, the larger of the two, had trouble maintaining core body temperature and tired quickly with nursing. Caitlyn, baby A, also had trouble maintaining core body temperature. She unfortunately needed a nasogastric feeding tube to help her intake, as she too tired quickly with feeding. All in all, they did great! Thankfully they both stayed in the newborn nursery and never needed to be transferred to the NICU. Woohoo!

They received excellent care and each day looked brighter. I would visit with them daily. I would take turns having skin to skin time with each girl. They loved it, as I did too.



Almost two weeks after their birth, we were finally able to bring them home. All the siblings united after such a long wait. Excitement filling the air, this was the happiest day ever. I was so happy to finally have all my children finally under one roof.

Needless to say, getting back to my workouts after delivery took a long time..... but I did it.

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Your strength journey from here

Hey ladies! If you are looking for that extra encouragement or simply need help getting that pre-pregnancy body back, look no further. My personal trainer and strength coach is available to assist you in achieving your fitness goals. Let's face it sometimes we need a little help or a lot of help. From personal experience, having someone watch me and be able to critique my body mechanics is key to keeping my body healthy and increasing strength. I am thankful to have him and his expertise. Let him train you too. You will be thanking yourself later for this, trust me! The exercises descriptions section in this book are straight from Dan's latest manual called, Kettlebell Start Up Guide (available for free at baltimorekettlebellclub.com) which also includes both demo videos and coaching videos. This manual is only intended to be an introduction to kettlebell training. We selected the most basic and results producing exercises so that you can get the most benefit out of this added resource. Keep in mind that there is no published material available, for free or otherwise, that can take the place of a coach - someone who can correct major (or minor) technical flaws with active feedback.



Kettlebell exercises are dynamic and the movements demonstrated in this manual should eventually be looked at by a professional. I have never been one to say that you need a trainer to work out, but they help. Sometimes immensely. A trainer can make the difference between cutting down the learning curve, or doing something that could potentially hurt yourself.

Dan offers the following services online:

Programs

Once you have a good grasp of the exercises performed here, that's when you're ready for more complex workouts. At this point, certain exercises take priority and the intensity, frequency and order you perform them should be considered.

Dan has a variety of workouts that he uses in his classes and in his training. There are two basic formats:

- 1) KISS Complexes
- 2) 6-week Programs

KISS Complexes - Stand-alone workouts with a basic instruction. 30 different kettlebell complexes (10 single kettlebell 10 double kettlebell and 10 kettlebell & bodyweight exercise combos)

This is a spreadsheet that contains many of the exercises detailed in the Kettlebell Start Up Guide, but also many more! This document features some of Dan's favorite workouts.

Swing #1	Sets/Reps
Deadlift	10
Swing	20
Plank	60 sec
Notes:	
20 min AMRAP	

Swing #2	Sets/Reps
Deadlift	10
Swing	20
Push Up	10
Notes:	
20 min AMRAP	

Swing #3	Sets/Reps
Deadlift	10
Swing	20
Squat	10
Notes:	
20 min AMRAP	

Press #1	Sets/Reps
Deadlift	20
Press	5
Row	10
Notes:	
20 min AMRAP	

Press #2	Sets/Reps
Swing	20
Press	5
Row	10
Notes:	

Intro Kettlebell 1 Instructions:

24kg men / 12kg women (Elite - 32kg men / 16kg women)
 AMRAP = As Many Rounds As Possible
 Rest breaks permitted during sets
 Complexes can be combined

TGU #1	Reps
TGU	3
Swing	50
Notes:	
20 min AMRAP	

TGU #2	Reps
TGU	3
Swing	50
Squat	20
Notes:	
20 min AMRAP	

TGU #3	Reps
TGU	3
Plank	60 sec
Swing	50
Squat	20
Notes:	
20 min AMRAP	

Kettlebell 1	Reps
TGU	5

Available as a PDF, or in Excel / Numbers by request. It's 3 sheets - the first sheet will focus on a specific order to teach the exercises. The second sheet is single kettlebell complexes and the third sheet is double kettlebell complexes.

There's also a bonus sheet from the KettleBody class which is also included which contains kettlebell and bodyweight exercise complexes.

These are proven exercise complexes that are being used by some of the best in the kettlebell world. A mix of what is being taught by leading instructors and what Dan has developed on his own at Baltimore Kettlebell Club.

These are many of the same complexes he uses in his classes and with his private training students.

Whenever he needs a standard measurement other than "how much I can lift?" He draws from these complexes in his own training.

Each complex has basic instructions and can be scaled.

Some complexes are "5 min finishers" and some are entire workouts. Combine them for an increased training effect!

Get all 30+ KISS Complexes NOW for just \$20

It's the best way Dan can tell you exactly what to do for the least amount of money!

Just follow this link to get started:

<http://baltimorekettlebellclub.com/kb-tw2/>

The other option for programming is 6-week programming.

6-week Programs - 3 to 7 day per week routine with built in progression schemes.

These are custom designed programs that are based on how you answer the following questions:

- What is your primary and secondary goal?
- Where are you in relation to that goal?
- What equipment do you have?
- How many days a week will you workout?

If you answer these questions in detail, Dan can design a custom 6-week program for you. Some follow up may be necessary.

The 2-1-3 Clean Press Squat Program – FREE SAMPLE PROGRAM

2-1-3 Clean, Press, Squat

Week	1		2		3		4		5		6	
Workout A	Wt.	Reps / Sets	Wt.	Reps / Sets	Wt.	Reps / Sets	Wt.	Reps / Sets	Wt.	Reps / Sets	Wt.	Reps / Sets
TGU	16	5										
Swing	16	20 / 5										
Clean, Press, Squat	16	1 / 20										
Swing	16	100										
Notes: TGU lists total reps each arm, switch hands as necessary. Swing 1 hand (EMOM) every min on the min. (Last set of swings done with as little rest as possible) Clean, Press, Squat complex - 1 rep each hand, EMOM.												
Week	1		2		3		4		5		6	
Workout B	Wt.	Reps / Sets	Wt.	Set/Reps								
TGU	16	5										
Swing	20	20 / 5										
"2-1-3" complex	16's	1 / 20										
Swing	20	100										
Notes: TGU lists total reps each arm, switch hands as necessary. Swing 1 hand (EMOM) every min on the min. (Last set of swings done with as little rest as possible) "2-1-3" = 2 cleans, 1 press, 3 squats, w/ double bells.												
Week	1		2		3		4		5		6	
Workout C	Wt.	Reps / Sets	Wt.	Reps / Sets	Wt.	Reps / Sets	Wt.	Reps / Sets	Wt.	Reps / Sets	Wt.	Reps / Sets
TGU	16	10										
Swing	16	20 / 10										
Squat	16	10 / 3										
Notes: TGU lists total reps each arm, switch hands as necessary. Swing EMOM or w/ as little rest as possible. Squat goblet or front squat.												
GENERAL NOTES: Program assumes a 1-3RM of 24kg press. Adjust weights accordingly. Ladies should adjust weights listed approx. 50% for TGU's and complexes, and 80% for swings and squats Workouts A & B should be completed once a week on non-consecutive days. Trainees may workout more than 3x a week if desired but should do Workout C. Set/Reps are targets numbers. Trainee should repeat any workout that doesn't meet target numbers. Increase bell size after each 6 week cycle. Repeat 3-6 cycles per year.												

If you want build muscle, lose weight, get stronger, better condition, or perform your best – Dan can provide a plan that will help you do that.

If you are new to exercise programming, intermediate or advanced – Dan can add some insights.

If you have your own kettlebells, or access to other equipment – Dan most likely has too and/or is experienced using that equipment too!

If you are planning to devote 2 hours a week to exercise or workout everyday – Dan can write a 2 day a week or 7 day a week program for you.

It will be a 6-week program that specifies exactly what to do each workout. Most programs can be re-cycled as long as the training goals remain the same.

Get a custom made 6-week Program for the introductory price of \$75!

Once again, this program is tailored to meet your needs, wants and desires.

Do you want that flatter stomach so you can feel more confident in a bathing suit this season?

In 6 weeks you could be well on your way to a tighter waistline!

Click here to watch the video to learn more about 6 Week Programs:

<http://baltimorekettlebellclub.com/kb-co/>

Online Training

Online Training is for individuals who want to take the next step in their training. This is the next best thing to having a personal trainer!

Clients have the opportunity to work with Dan from the comfort and convenience of their own home (or gym). Dan designs your program and provides videos as necessary; you keep a workout log **and provide** videos if you need help with technique.

Here's how it works:

We use Evernote as the platform for online training. Shared notebooks are created and collaborated on. Each notebook will contain these notes:

- 1) Goals / Stats - maintained by the client
- 2) Programs - workouts given by Dan
- 3) Workout Log - maintained by the client, monitored by Dan
- 4) Videos - maintained by both client and Dan, for form critique and demos
- 5) Life Notes (optional)

Clients will have email access to Dan to ask questions, get critiques and request new programs. Client agrees to follow instructions to the best of their ability and keep accurate and up-to-date records of their progress.

Online Training is available for only \$175 per month

There is also an option to meet with a nutritionist to discuss your diet. The Online Training Plus option includes everything as listed above, AND bi-weekly nutritional consultations!

Let's face it, the diet is the hardest part about getting into great shape.

You can't out work a donut.

But you can undo all the hard work you put into working out with a few bad choices and lack of proper planning.

Maybe you don't know how to eat like an athlete?

How many carbs, protein and grams of fat you should be consuming to meet your goals.

A registered dietician can answer those questions for you and set you up with a meal plan for success.

Online Training Plus Nutrition is available for only \$240 per month!

That is a month of training for about what it would cost for just one meeting with each of these two professionals.

Click here to watch the video and learn more:

<http://baltimorekettlebellclub.com/kb-us/>

**ALL THE BEST IN YOUR TRAINING!
THANK YOU!**

