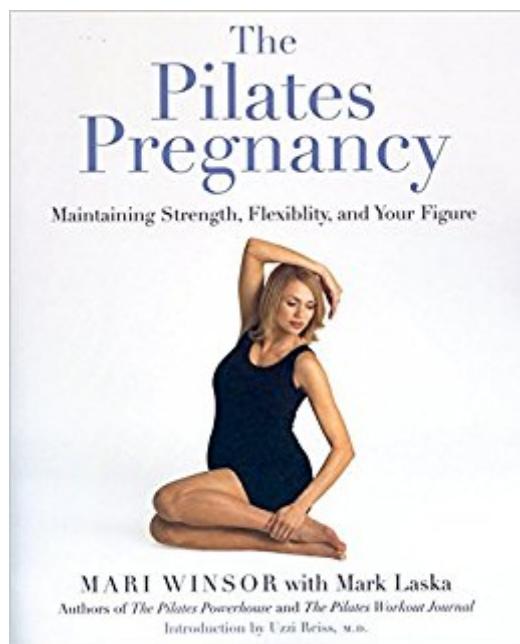


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# The Pilates Pregnancy: Maintaining Strength, Flexibility, And Your Figure



## **Synopsis**

A wonderful conditioning exercise for women of all shapes and sizes, Pilates is now recognized as one of the best overall exercises for the pregnant body as well. A low-impact and relaxing exercise regimen, Pilates doesn't divert blood flow from the growing fetus. As important, Pilates strengthens the abdominal muscles known as the "powerhouse," making it easier for new mothers to recover from childbirth and regain their pre-pregnancy waistline. Working with Dr. Uzzi Reiss, a prominent Los Angeles-based gynecologist and obstetrician, Mari Winsor has developed the first mat-based Pilates routine for pregnant women, bringing this time-efficient and highly effective means to get and stay in shape into the home. Illustrated with 100 black-and-white photographs, the exercises in *The Pilates Pregnancy* are gentle on the body and easy to do at any stage of pregnancy.

## **Book Information**

Paperback: 208 pages

Publisher: Da Capo Press; First Printing edition (November 2001)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 073820501X

ISBN-13: 978-0738205014

Product Dimensions: 7.5 x 0.5 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 9 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #998,631 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #85 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Exercise & Fitness > Pregnancy #116 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Exercise & Fitness > Stretching #142 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Exercise & Fitness > Pilates

## **Customer Reviews**

Pilates is an exceptional exercise technique for core strengthening, flexibility, and developing a lean, strong physique. But is it right for pregnancy? Yes, says Pilates trainer-to-the-stars Mari Winsor. Pilates is a safe way to reduce stress and increase comfort and balance during pregnancy. Additionally, Pilates will make your pregnancy and delivery easier, your recovery quicker, and it will benefit your baby by keeping blood circulating to the abdominal area, says obstetrician Uzzi Reiss, M.D., in the foreword. Winsor explains Pilates concepts and techniques, with a focus on the pregnant body. Then she presents 22 to 39 exercises in each of three workouts, one for each trimester, that are most suitable for pregnant women. The exercises are described clearly and

carefully in three stages--"prep" (getting in the correct position to begin), "ready" (techniques and cautions for doing the exercise correctly), and "action" (step-by-step instructions)--and are well illustrated with photos. The Pilates Pregnancy is aimed at both novices and experienced exercisers, but since it's difficult to learn Pilates from scratch from a book, it will be most useful for the experienced Pilates exerciser who wants a safe home workout throughout her pregnancy.

--Joan Price

The Pilates trainer-to-the-stars, Mari Winsor owns and operates two Pilates studios in the Los Angeles area. She has been featured in Allure, Redbook, Elle, LA Magazine, Health & Fitness, USA Today, Fitness, Shape, In Style, Vogue, and Time and has appeared on MTV, "Access Hollywood," and "Entertainment Tonight." She is the author of The Pilates Workout Journal and The Pilates Powerhouse, for which she appeared on the Oprah Winfrey show. Mark Laska is a professional writer and publicist and co-author of The Pilates Powerhouse and Body-Fat Breakthru! He lives in Los Angeles.

This is a great book to help guide the pregnant exerciser in general, and especially if you are interested in pilates during pregnancy. It has three workout programs, one for each trimester. The book contains modifications for pregnant moms on the traditional movements, and even addresses the mom brand new to pilates. There are pictures and descriptions for each move, and also a brief explanation of the benefits. A bonus; the pictures for each exercise actually show a real pregnant woman, in different stages of pregnancy. This helps to show placement of the belly in relation to the rest of the body. I would have liked for it to cover some reformer exercises, but it only covers matwork. In any case, it gives you good ideas for modifications that you could use with your machines too. There is some repetition from her other book "The Pilates Powerhouse", but if you don't already have that book, no problem. Otherwise, there is enough new information to make this book work purchasing. Especially since it's the only book I've seen devoted to pilates for the pregnant woman.

This book was a little dated but got the point across. I am a certified Pilates instructor and purchased this book as a refresher for some pregnant students and ended up referencing it again when I went through my subsequent pregnancies. This book is great for both a student and an instructor.

Okay, here is what I think that you should know. This program works. I have had four children within the last 6 1/2 years. For three of the pregnancies, I did this workout and lost all of my pregnancy weight. In fact, with my last two pregnancies I was back to my pre-pregnancy weight within a few days to two weeks. During my second pregnancy, for multiple reasons that aren't relevant to this review, I did not do this Pilates workout. The result? After I gave birth I was fifty pounds heavier than I was before and I still have not lost that weight gain. I cannot comment on how traditional this Pilates workout is or whether or not "purists" will like it. What I do know is that it works. My weight stayed under control with those three pregnancies and my body was SO MUCH MORE COMFORTABLE. There were times when I would be aching, aching, aching. I would then do the workout and feel so much better - night and day difference. Don't worry if you have never done Pilates before, I hadn't either. The author recommends that if you have never done Pilates before, start with the second trimester workout, even if you are in your first trimester. I did that with my three pregnancies and it worked great. My only complaint about the book is that it can be hard to figure out the written directions. At least it was for me, a person who learns by seeing and doing. I was determined to understand the exercises, though, and with my husband's help I was able to do it. I am still giving this book five stars, however, because the workout is just that good.

I just bought this book a couple of weeks ago and have really been enjoying it. I feel like my posture is great after a single workout and feel very strong in my core. I always look forward to my Pilates workout. I felt it was a little repetitive in the intro. and the beginning chapters, when the principles of Pilates, etc. are explained, but they do get their points across effectively. I also felt they do a disservice to pregnant women by insinuating that Pilates is the only good or effective help for preventing low back pain. (p. 11) For example, they write, 'what chiropractor will work on a pregnant woman?' Any chiropractor I know has had a lot of training to work on pregnant women and their newborns later on. There are also other helpful resources a pregnant woman has, such as massage therapy. I realize they are trying to promote Pilates primarily, as that's what the book is teaching, yet I think it'd be great if they would have been more open to giving a little more info. on things that would work well hand-in-hand with the Pilates exercises.

I really like this book. I had been doing Pilates matwork for about 18 months when I became pregnant. I didn't start using the book's routines until I was about 16 weeks pregnant, because before that time my regular Stott Intermediate Matwork video routine seemed fine. I really like the second trimester routine Mari has outlined -- although I don't do the entire routine because of time --

I skip some of the side-lying work and the rowing moves. I'm now 33 weeks pregnant and still doing the second trimester routine because it still feels good (although last week I dropped a couple of the moves that were beginning to get uncomfortable). I have no problems exercising while on my back -- and I have been told that as long as I don't feel dizzy or nauseated, that exercising on my back is fine. I would recommend this book to anyone wanting to try Pilates during pregnancy, especially those women who already have at least a basic understanding of the moves.

As a Pilates instructor, I do not think this is the best book for pregnancy. There is no discussion about what is safe in each trimester, and I do not think there are enough modifications of the exercises to accommodate pregnancy (in fact, the only modified exercise is the hundreds for third trimester). Essentially, she gives the exact same exercises for each trimester and gives no information on how to modify them for an expanding belly, for safety, etc. A much better book is the Pilates Workbook for Pregnancy by King. If you already know Pilates then you dont need Winsor's book (very basic exercises that you will already know), and if you are not familiar with Pilates you should find a more detailed, safety-oriented book for your pregnancy.

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