

# How to be as fit as Mum

Conscious about looks, many mums are now opting for weight loss methods...which can only mean one thing, these days being a mother doesn't mean you have to lose that gorgeous figure



## S Surekha

Whether it is hitting the treadmill, lifting a few extra weights or doing yoga, our young mums are doing it all to shed that extra bit of flab. Women, today, are a lot more conscious about the way they look. In about two to three months after delivery they can be seen at gymnasiums, working out in an effort to fit into their old denims.

"Before pregnancy people said I had a perfect 10 figure. But with the baby coming, my waist expanded from 26 to 32 inches," says Natasha Bugwadia, a free-lance graphic designer, just as she walks out after her work out at the Gold's gym. Natasha, who is currently mothering a six-month-old baby, says, "For me it is important to get back into shape and my biggest motivation is when I look at my closet."

According to Deepali Kamble, a trainer at the Gold's Gym, "A woman can start workouts two months after a normal delivery and in a case of a C-section, a three-month wait is advisable. Initially, since the stamina is low, workouts should not be very strenuous and the aim is to increase the stamina and flexibility slowly."

Workouts for sure have been a tried and tested method of losing weight, but many women today are opting for the more holistic science of yoga for weight loss. According to Satyavati Page, who has been teaching yoga at The Yoga Institute at Santacruz for over five years, "Yoga helps to keep the body fit both physically and mentally. Many women come for our ante- and post-natal camps and they are allowed to come even 40 days after the delivery."

Hemali Ravat, one such woman



who took up yoga three months after giving birth to a baby at the Shantadurga Charitable trust in Borivli, lost around seven kilograms in two-and-a-half months. "Yoga really helped me. The best part was that I could practise it at home. I did not

## KEEPING FIT, THE SAFE WAY

Once you get the green light from your doctor, any type of aerobic exercise will help you shed the extra pounds. Exercises that use large muscle groups (walking, swimming, biking, or jogging) and elevate your heart rate are particularly effective

If you're breastfeeding, exercise when your breasts aren't full of milk. For comfort and extra support, wear a sports bra over your nursing bra.

Weigh yourself only once per week to keep the stress of slow weight loss to a minimum. Losing about half a kilo / a pound per week is safe.

If you're new to the joy of exercise, start slowly and increase your intensity and duration over time. If you exercise too hard too soon after delivery, your vaginal flow (lochia) may increase or turn pink — a signal to slow down.

Applaud yourself for small goals and achievements, such as exercising three times per week.

This isn't the time to diet to lose weight. Though milk production is largely independent of nutritional intake during the first few months of breastfeeding (the fat accumulated in pregnancy provides a ready supply of calories), if your diet isn't adequate, you're more likely to be tired and listless.

Source: Babycentre

have to leave my toddler alone to go out and exercise," she says.

Dr Preeti Sharma, a yoga therapist who has been teaching yoga since the last 17 years, says, "Practising yoga can be as helpful as working out in losing weight. There are many

aasanas (postures) that help in toning the body and if practised regularly, you can get back into shape real fast.

The CLAY institute is another such place that helps women tone up and provides care in the ante- and post-natal periods. Divya Merchant, a 25-year-old homemaker who joined the institute two months after delivering her baby, has seen a lot of improvement since the time she started. "The exercises initially are more to keep the limbs moving and to increase flexibility. It helped me remain energetic and healthy," she says.

Sonali Shrivani, the trainer at the CLAY institute, teaches exercises and also recommends the diet for her clients in the one month Post Natal Programme. "The aim is to get the muscles back on track. The initial exercises are light and most of the exercises are for toning up the body," she says. "Post delivery, the body is in the weight loss mode, and so a couple of months of exercises and you can get back into your old jeans."

Whatever the method, but most women agree that it is extremely important to get back into shape and most importantly feel good about yourself and the way you look. Farzana Pardiwala who had a C-section delivery hit the gym three months after having her baby. "I felt the real need to regain my initial shape and size. It was very important to me. Today, women are hugely focussed and health conscious. It's great. Moreover, you want to get your husband's affection back. Today, I feel a lot better and happier after I lost quite a bit of weight," she concludes with a smile.

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