

your doctor approves. Here are a few guidelines to ensure a safe workout:

- If you have been working out, maintain your usual level of activity—don't increase it.
- Exercise at least three times a week.
- Drink plenty of water to prevent overheating and dehydration.
- Never exercise to exhaustion.
- Choose exercises like stationary cycling, walking, swimming and weight training with light or three- to five-pound hand weights.
- Avoid any activities with a risk of falling or trauma to the abdomen.
- As pregnancy progresses and your center of gravity shifts, be careful of activities requiring balance.
- If the additional weight is presenting a difficulty, switch to non-weight-bearing exercises, such as swimming or stationary cycling.
- Stop exercising immediately and go to see your doctor right away if you experience any pain or bleeding or if your water breaks. —by Michele Stanten

ABS TONERS DURING PREGNANCY

Shaping up abdominal muscles after pregnancy can be a real workout. For the best chance at a flat belly afterward, tone and tighten them before and during pregnancy. Crunches, or partial sit-ups, are the ab exercise of choice. But after the first trimester, you're not supposed to lie on your back, so we asked Julie Tupler, R.N., certified childbirth educator, personal trainer and owner of Maternal Fitness, in New York City, for some "upright" exercises to keep your abs in shape.

■ **PELVIC TILT** Start by standing with your feet about shoulder-width apart, knees bent and your back flat. Pull your abdominals in as you tuck your buttocks under. Hold for 5 seconds, then release. The movement is similar to pressing your lower back against the floor if you were lying down. Repeat the exercise while you're on your hands and knees. Remember to start with a flat back and work only your lower back. Do 10 tilts in each position.

■ **TUPLER TECHNIQUE** Sitting cross-legged on the floor, support your back against a wall. Think of your abdomen as a sideways elevator: first floor—abdomen relaxed; fifth

floor—belly button "touches" the spine. Begin by inhaling and expanding your belly. As you exhale, pull your belly button back to the third floor. This is your starting position. Now pull the belly button to the fifth floor. Hold for 2 seconds and release to third floor. Repeat 10 times. (Count out loud to ensure that you keep breathing.) Your back shouldn't move. Do 5 sets a day.

