

Ask the Expert: Getting back in shape after baby

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Kaz Muddell is the fitness coach behind mobile training service Mind Body Motion Fitness Solutions.

THE PROBLEM: GETTING BACK INTO SHAPE AFTER BABY

THE EXPERT: FITNESS COACH KAZ MUDDPELL OF MIND BODY MOTION FITNESS SOLUTIONS mindbodymotion.com.au

Recovering from childbirth can take time, especially if you've had a caesarean. First, get clearance from your doctor to make sure everything's OK and you're fit enough to start training.

START SLOWLY: Begin by walking regularly before you progress to more vigorous exercise. Strolling with the pram is a great start and you can increase speed as you get fitter.

PELVIC FLOOR: Strengthen your pelvic floor muscles before you start doing high impact exercises such as jumping, skipping and running. To practice, imagine you need to stop yourself from going to the toilet, pulling the muscles up and in. Hold the position for five to 10 counts, then release. Repeat several times.

Breathe normally. This can be done several times a day!

RSI: Many mums suffer from repetitive strain injuries in their shoulders and back from picking up their child on the same side each time. Avoid this by alternating sides. If you are getting sore muscles, treat yourself to regular massage.

STRENGTH TRAINING: You're going to have to carry a growing baby around, so your body should be strong and injury free. A one-on-one with a fitness coach will ensure you start your training on the right foot, and a trainer can tailor a program that suits you and your abilities. A mix of light cardio, weights and light resistance training is the optimal. Get back into classes, once you're up to speed you can do anything and there are plenty of class options for mums. Try mums and bubs classes, mums and toddlers classes as well as mums only classes. These have a lot of general resistance, cardio and core strength exercises.

FLEXIBILITY: The more flexible you are, the less risk of strain or injury. Yoga is perfect. This is important for mums especially, because you also need a bit of "me" time. Be patient, it's taken nine months to a year for you to lose a bit of muscle tone; it may take half as long to get it back. But compared with giving birth, getting fit this summer is going to be a cakewalk, so take it slowly and enjoy! Mind Body Motion Fitness Solutions is an outdoor mobile training service that operates across the North Shore and the Hills District.

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