

Antepartum Exercises for Modified Bedrest

Building strength before you give birth

What are antepartum exercises?

Antepartum is the period of time before you give birth. You were given these exercises because you are on *modified bedrest*. During modified bedrest, you will be sitting or lying down most of the day.

These exercises will help you:

- Maintain strength and range of motion in your arms, legs, and torso while your activity is limited.
- Maintain your *stamina* (ability to keep your energy levels up) while you are staying in the hospital.
- Prevent complications related to bedrest, such as blood clots, muscle tightness, back pain, or increased stress and anxiety.

How often should I do these exercises?

- Please do these exercises 2 times a day: 1 time in the morning and 1 time in the afternoon or evening.
- Start by doing 10 repetitions of each exercise.
- When you are ready for more of a challenge, increase the number of repetitions or the number of times you do the exercises daily.
- You can do the ankle pumps and ankle circles throughout the day as often as is comfortable for you.

Exercising Safely on Modified Bedrest

To do the exercises safely, please follow these precautions:

- Do **not** hold your breath while doing the exercises. Take full, even breaths in and out.
- Do not *overwork* (strain) your stomach muscles while you are doing the exercises. Keep your stomach muscles relaxed if you can. Focus on engaging your back muscles to stabilize you while you move your arms and legs.
- Only do the standing exercises if your hospital OB says it is OK for you to do them.

Stop the exercises if:

- You start to have more contractions.
- You feel increased pain or pressure in your pelvic area.
- You start to have more vaginal discharge.

How often will I see a physical therapist (PT)?

After you are seen and evaluated by a Physical Therapist (PT), you will remain on our caseload during your hospital stay.

We will follow up with you every 1 to 2 weeks. It is your responsibility to do your exercises every day. If you feel like you need to touch base with the physical therapy team to review your exercise plan, please ask your nurse to contact us. If you have any questions, please call the UWMC Physical Therapy Department at 206.598.4830.

QUESTIONS?

Your questions are important. Contact your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

UWMC Physical Therapy: Call 206.598.4830 weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Your physical therapist's name and phone number:
