

The Physical Activity Calculator - EPR Maternity booking form:

The Physical Activity calculator is an exciting new section on the EPR Maternity booking form. For the first time, you will be able to record levels and start to promote physical activity.

We understand that during the booking visit there is a significant amount of information to discuss, however addressing common misconceptions regarding physical activity in pregnancy and promoting healthy, active pregnancies is of fundamental importance.

Below you will find: background information, how to use the tool, key FAQs and further contact details.

Background information:

Pregnancy is a unique opportunity for behaviour change with regular contact with health care professionals¹. Promoting behaviours such as smoking cessation alcohol avoidance are widespread and everyday practice, but often little attention is given to promoting physical activity and reducing sedentary behaviour.

Keeping physically active is really important for health during pregnancy as strong evidence exists of widespread benefits including reducing the risk of gestational diabetes, excessive gestational weight gain and improving cardiovascular fitness, mood and sleep². ([See CMO infographic & guidance for more information](#)).

Currently, only a small proportion of pregnant women are meeting the recommended guidance. Furthermore activity levels tend to decline during pregnancy³. With your help, we would like to address this.

The Physical Activity Calculator:

An initial step to discussing physical activity is often to ask about how much physical activity they are currently undertaking.

Use the physical activity calculator to enquire about their current activity levels and assess whether they are meeting the recommended guidelines. This is often a useful first phase in starting to change behaviour.

The Physical Activity calculator is a simple and practical way of collecting this information. It is comprised of two questions and is based on the exercise vital sign (EVS)⁴.

Some women will already be active enough and will just need reassurance to keep active. However, many women will require further encouragement and advice.

How to use the Physical Activity Calculator:

In the Physical Activity Calculator section on the EPR form there will be a prompt to ask two questions:

- 1) **On average, how many days per week do they engage in moderate intensity or greater physical activity (like a brisk walk) lasting at least 10 minutes?**

- 2) **On those days, how many minutes do they engage in activity at this level?**

Remember: These questions are related to a week in the individual's life when they have been feeling well. For instance, if they have developed an acute illness or are pregnant and suffering morning sickness it is related to a week prior to those symptoms when their health has been stable.

Once you have entered the answers to each question. The tool will calculate the amount of activity they perform in a week. The recommended level is 150 minutes. There are 3 traffic light coded boxes with suggested advice.

- Green box = 150 minutes/week
- Yellow box = between 150-30 minutes/week
- Red box = Less than 30 minutes/week

Please could you supply (email/print out) the OUH Physical Activity during pregnancy leaflet (we are currently working to update this). **It may be helpful to print the leaflets out in advance.**

What is meant by moderate intensity activity?

An activity that causes adults to feel warmer, breathe harder and their hearts beat faster. At this level, your patient can talk, but cannot sing during activity. Using this "talk test" is useful for your patients to gauge their own level relative to their current fitness level.

Where can I get further information about physical activity for pregnant women:

The CMO infographic is a useful tool to facilitate brief advice regarding the physical activity benefits, types, recommended levels and key safety messages. This is also separate document on the guidance.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/start-active-stay-active-infographics-on-physical-activity>

More information about this project:

This initiative is part of an exciting national feasibility project to promote physical activity amongst pregnant women in the maternity department.

OUHFT has recently been commissioned by Public Health England to deliver a national physical activity feasibility pilot project in secondary care. The project is strongly endorsed by Bruno Holthoff, Chief Executive of the Trust. Maternity is one of the five key action areas.

Who can I contact if I need help:

For first point of contact, please email our midwife and physical activity Clinical Champion if need help with the booking form or need more information about physical activity for pregnant women.

References:

1. ACOG Committee Opinion No. 650: Physical Activity and Exercise During Pregnancy and the Postpartum Period. *Obstet Gynecol.* 2015;126(6):e135-142.
2. Smith R, Reid H, Matthews A, et al. Infographic: physical activity for pregnant women. *Br J Sports Med.* 2017.
3. Borodulin KM, Evenson KR, Wen F, Herring AH, Benson AM. Physical activity patterns during pregnancy. *Med Sci Sports Exerc.* 2008;40(11):1901-1908.
4. Coleman KJ, Ngor E, Reynolds K, et al. Initial validation of an exercise "vital sign" in electronic medical records. *Med Sci Sports Exerc.* 2012;44(11):2071-2076.