



### Summary of Community Preventive Services Task Force Recommendation

The Community Preventive Services Task Force (CPSTF) recommends exercise programs for pregnant women to reduce the development of gestational hypertension.

### Major Findings

The CPSTF recommendation is based on evidence from 17 studies identified in a systematic review published in 2017.<sup>1</sup> This CPSTF finding is specific to one type—gestational hypertension without the development of preeclampsia-eclampsia.

- Compared to interventions without an exercise program or to usual care, exercise programs reduced the development of high blood pressure during pregnancy by 46%.
- The cesarean delivery rate for program participants was 16% lower than the rate for comparison groups.
- The rate of preeclampsia was 21% lower among program participants when compared with control groups, though the difference was not statistically significant.

The CDC provides additional guidance on high blood pressure in pregnancy.<sup>1</sup>

### Which exercise programs prevent gestational hypertension?

Exercise initiated early in pregnancy can help reduce excessive weight gain and prevent gestational diabetes. The exercise programs aim to engage women in regular exercise before their 16<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy through birth. These interventions may be delivered in health system facilities, or in community-based or home settings.

### Facts about Gestational Hypertension

- In the United States the rate of hypertensive disorders in pregnancy have increased substantially over the years, rising from 5.3 per 100 delivery hospitalizations in 1993 up to 9.1 per 100 delivery hospitalizations in 2014.<sup>2</sup>
- Moderate-intensity physical activity by healthy women during pregnancy increases or maintains cardiorespiratory fitness, reduces the risk of excessive weight gain and gestational diabetes, and reduces symptoms of postpartum depression.<sup>3</sup>



### Learn More

#### Summary of Evidence and CPSTF Finding

[www.thecommunityguide.org/findings/pregnancy-health-exercise-programs-prevent-gestational-hypertension](http://www.thecommunityguide.org/findings/pregnancy-health-exercise-programs-prevent-gestational-hypertension)

#### CDC, Reproductive Health

[www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth](http://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth)

<sup>1</sup> High Blood Pressure During Pregnancy Fact Sheet. 2018. <https://www.cdc.gov/bloodpressure/pregnancy.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Magro-Malosso E, Saccone G, Di Tommaso M, Roman A, Berghella V. Exercise during pregnancy and risk of gestational hypertension disorders: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Acta Obstetrica et Gynecologica Scandinavica* 2017;96:921-31.

<sup>3</sup> Data on Selected Pregnancy Complications in the United States. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018. <https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/maternalinfanthealth/pregnancy-complications-data.htm>

<sup>4</sup> Pregnancy Complications. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018. <https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/maternalinfanthealth/pregnancy-complications.html>

Established in 1996 by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Community Preventive Services Task Force (CPSTF) is an independent, nonfederal panel of public health and prevention experts whose members are appointed by the director of CDC. The CPSTF provides information for a wide range of decision makers on programs, services, and other interventions aimed at improving population health. Although CDC provides administrative, scientific, and technical support for the CPSTF, the recommendations developed are those of the CPSTF and do not undergo review or approval by CDC. Find more information at [www.thecommunityguide.org](http://www.thecommunityguide.org).