



Active moms are healthy moms

Physical activity during pregnancy results in healthier mothers.

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Physical activity during pregnancy leads to many health benefits.

Prenatal physical activity is a cornerstone to healthy living. Scientific evidence has shown that pregnant women who do regular physical exercise during pregnancy have reduced maternal weight gain, reduced risk of gestational diabetes mellitus and pre-eclampsia, and other health benefits.

Historically, physical activity during pregnancy was frowned upon. Notwithstanding that prenatal physical activity is associated with multiple health benefits, most women in Africa, including in South Africa, rarely

participate in prenatal physical activity.

In contrast to more developed countries, there is scarcity of research focusing specifically on prenatal physical activity and exercise among South African women. In order to promote prenatal activity effectively and strategically, such information is important to plan for an intervention strategy.

“We need to understand where women get advice on physical activity during pregnancy and what advice they act upon, as this is necessary for

improving healthcare support,” says Uchenna Benedine Okafor.

“Physical activity plays a significant role in maternal health; therefore, creating awareness of its benefits and contraindications may change women’s negative attitudes toward physical activity and promote it for better maternal outcomes, which may decrease the burden of preventable pregnancy-related conditions on the healthcare system, which is already overburdened.”