



Sparkle  
Fitness

# Returning to Running Guide

*Kia ora! Sierra here!*

So, you want to start running after having a baby? Seems simple right? But there are a few things that may have changed since you last laced up.

I'm on a mission to ensure that no women leaks when running. I also want to guide women to working with their bodies, not against them. You may have experienced something like this if you have already been out for a run. Or maybe things just didn't "feel right".

Even if you ran before you had children, this doesn't guarantee that you can jump right back in. This was certainly the case for me! I was an accomplished runner and top age group triathlete before I had my daughter. But on my return to training I felt heavy, weak and there was no strength in my legs. It wasn't until I focused on re-building my strength and adapting my training to my postpartum body that I was able to feel like myself again.

From my experience, and my experience training other mums, I've put together a guide to help you get running. This checklist is just one of the many tools I have for my clients so they can make the most of their training time and reach their goals.

I've been involved in the running and triathlon space for over 20 years. I've been helping women of all stages and abilities reach their goals and this guide will set you on the right path to reach yours!

Happy running!



# Returning to Running

What you need to know before returning to running after having a baby.



## When?

There is actually no specific timeframe - it is based on function and is individual to each Mum depending on the following, however it is generally not recommended before 3 months:

- Running history
- Pregnancy and birth experience
- Pelvic floor and core strength and function

## Risk factors to consider

Your body has changed during your pregnancy, birth and postpartum experience. The following things all put you at a greater risk of injury if you return to running too soon:

- <3 months postpartum
- Effects of breastfeeding
- Abdominal separation
- Pelvic floor dysfunction
- Amount of sleep, stress & support

## 5 Simple Steps

- 1 See a women's health physio for an assessment
- 2 Rebuilding pelvic floor and core strength and function
- 3 Running specific strength training exercises before starting to run  
When cleared by physio, commence a gradual return to running starting with run/walk and building the run time
- 4 Be flexible in progress, depending on sleep and energy levels
- 5



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## Strength Exercises for Running

Whilst I recommend you work with a MumSafe™ Trainer for a specific running program, here are some strength exercises to get you started. Start with bilateral movements (both legs) and move to single leg as strength improves.

Aim for 8-10 reps of each exercise for 3 sets. Start with body weight then progress.



Squats & Wall Sits



Bridge



Calf raises (including single leg)



Monster Walk



Lunges



Single leg deadlift

## Pram Running

It is recommended to start running without the pram. Pram running requires additional glute strength and flexibility work so is something you can build up to.

## Breast Support

A good sports bra is a must for returning to high impact exercise. Our breasts have changed throughout pregnancy so a proper fitting sports bra is recommended. Breastfeeding Mums may also want to feed prior to a run for more comfort.