

bye-bye, baby weight

A WORKOUT THAT REALLY WORKS WITH YOUR LIFE!
PART TWO OF OUR THREE-MONTH SERIES

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY REGGIE CASAGRANDE

Nothing throws a wrench into a girl's workout routine like a new baby. So if the only thing you've crunched lately are lost Cheerios on the kitchen floor, fear not. You can make exercise part of your new life. *Babytalk* asked Mary Beth Knight, president and chief fitness director of StrollerFit—and one of the country's top experts in new-mom fitness—to design a strengthening and toning program just for you. If you signed up for this plan last month, you already know what we're pitching, but for those new to the concept, our goal is simple: to help you love, or at least embrace, your new-mom body. That's because a healthy mind-set will help blaze the trail toward a successful new fitness plan. (You can catch up with Part 1's body-image quiz at Parenting.com/babytalk.) Feeling ready to get started? Let's go!

1 Check in with your M.D. You can usually begin exercising as soon as you feel up to it. But most of us need at least a solid few weeks to recover—and even more if you had a cesarean section. Either way, be sure to get the official green light from your ob-gyn before beginning (or resuming) any fitness plan.

tons more online!

Sign up on parenting.com/babytalk for the Love Your New-Mom Body club, and you'll be automatically entered to win a three-day stay at The Greenhouse Spa.* You'll also receive weekly newsletters to keep you going and access to the LYNMB discussion forum to share stories and tips. Log on to StrollerFit.com to find a class featuring the *Babytalk* workout in May and June. Plus, everyone who registers for LYNMB gets 10 percent off StrollerFit classes or gear.

2 Feel free to customize. Knight organized this workout,

which you can do with or without your baby, by body region. That means you can mix and match moves according to your fitness needs, time, and interest. Plus, each move is designed to help you in a specific new-mom area of life—from reaching on your tippy-toes for diapers at the grocery store to toting your little one on your hip.

3 Do what you can. Ideally, you'll aim to complete this 15-move resistance-training routine twice a week to see visible changes in your body; three times a week to accelerate those results. You'll also do all the recommended repetitions. Realistically, you'll start where you start and build from there. These are just guidelines. The ultimate goal is to build your spirits, boost your body, and bust out of that postbaby fitness rut.

4 Keep a few things handy: a blanket or mat; bouncy seat or high chair; stroller; filled water bottles, jumbo soup cans, or hand weights (three to five pounds); a rubber ball (about the size of a softball).

5 Try mini-workouts. If carving out 45 minutes twice a week seems too daunting, you can get the same benefits by breaking it up into rotations: Monday is arms, Tuesday is core, Wednesday is legs, repeat. The only rule: Avoid working the same muscle groups two days in a row.

6 Add cardio for quicker weight loss. Shoot for 20 minutes of cardio, like fast walking, three times a week. Add five to ten minutes a week to one of those sessions, and you'll melt even more fat. Dig out those prebaby jeans—you'll be shimmying into them in no time!

*See page 79 for more details.



your workout starts here!

pop! goes the weasel

Hold your baby in front of you or in a front carrier. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, toes pointed out. Exhale as you lift up onto your tiptoes; inhale as you lower back down. Do a set of ten. Repeat two more times, once with toes pointing forward and once with toes turned slightly in. **For more challenge:** Aim for three sets of 30. >



skip to my luo

Stand behind your stroller (baby strapped inside) with hands on handlebars. Lunge forward with your right foot until right thigh is parallel to the ground; keep your knee over the ankle. Your left leg should be extended behind you and slightly bent. Then lunge forward with the left leg, pushing the stroller as you go. Complete three sets of 20 (10 per side).



hot cross buns

Hold on to a wall or railing, then slightly lift your left foot and flex toes. Bend your right knee about 30 degrees, then lift up. Do three sets of ten on each side. **For more challenge:** Hold a five-pound weight in your free hand.



itsy bitsy spider

Put your little one in a stroller, high chair, or bouncy seat, and face her. Take a wide stance, toes pointing out. Inhale as you lower to a plié, keeping your back straight and your buttocks tucked; your knees should not extend past your toes. Hold while singing a verse of "The Itsy Bitsy Spider" to your baby, doing the hand motions, too. Release. Repeat three to five times, resting for at least 15 to 20 seconds between.

For more challenge: Hold a three- to five-pound weight in each hand and skip the hand motions!



london bridge

Lie flat on your back with your knees bent, feet on the ground. Arms remain at your sides. If your baby is a stable sitter, place her on your hips, facing you. Lift your hips up, then lower back down. Do three sets of ten. **For more challenge:** Start in the same position, but extend one leg up (put the baby on the floor for this one). Do three sets per leg.

core toners



my bonnie lies over the ocean

Place your baby on the floor, and get on all fours above her. Extend your right arm and left leg, then lower and lift your fingertips and toes ten times. Do two sets per side.



i'm a little teapot

Lie down on your right side, supporting your upper body on your right forearm. Bend your knees 90 degrees. Draw in the lower belly to tighten muscles, then lift your hips off the floor. Hold for 10 to 20 seconds; repeat two times on each side. **For more challenge:** Keep both legs straight (as shown) so you lift your entire body.



monkey in the middle

Lie down on your right side, extending your right arm so your ear rests on your bicep. Lift both legs straight up off the floor about an inch. Holding your right leg still, lift and lower your left ten times. Complete two sets, then switch sides and repeat. >

*See page 79 for more details.

and don't miss...
Video of the moves on parenting.com/babytalk, courtesy of StrollerFit; **your chance to win*** one of ten *mommymuscle* Deluxe Sculpt kits, which include the mommy-muscle bar, a mat, a resistance tube, a DVD, and a StrollerFit backpack; **playlists** you'll love; **cute gear**; and **motivational exercises**, all on parenting.com/babytalk!

core toners



the wheels on the bus

Lie on your back with a squeezable ball between your feet. Extend your legs straight up, holding the ball between them. Keeping your legs straight, rotate them in small dinner-plate-size circles to the right ten times, then reverse. Avoid using momentum; instead, concentrate on pulling your navel toward the spine to tighten stomach muscles. **For more challenge:** Sing "The Wheels on the Bus" while circling and holding your baby on your tummy.



head, shoulders, knees, and toes

Lie on your back with your knees bent, feet flat on the floor; place a squeezable, softball-size ball between your knees or keep knees together. Place your arms at your sides. Lift your feet so your knees are over your hips and your shins are parallel to the floor. You should feel a strong contraction in the lower belly. Hold for five deep breaths (about 20 seconds), pulling your navel toward your spine, then lower legs. Do three times. **For more challenge:** Place your baby on your belly and lift your head and shoulders, too.



over the moon

Kneel holding a filled water bottle (or a soup can or weight) in each hand, arms down, palms facing forward. Sweep each arm out to the side and then overhead in wide circles. Do ten in one direction; reverse for ten. Repeat each set two more times.



dipsy do

Find a sturdy railing, bench, or coffee table. Place hands on railing next to hips, fingers forward. Walk your feet out so your rear end lifts. Bend elbows to lower and lift your body. Aim for three sets of eight.



kiss the frog

Lay or sit your baby on the floor. Get in a modified push-up position: knees on the floor, hands wider-than-shoulder-distance apart, placed near your baby's feet. Lower down toward your baby, blow a kiss, then press up. Do three sets of eight.



curly locks

Hold weights, arms down, palms forward. Curl to 90 degrees, then release. Repeat seven times. Bend elbows to 90 degrees, curl to shoulders, lower to 90 degrees. Repeat seven times. Return hands to sides, curl to shoulders seven times. Do three sets each.



row, row, row your boat

Hold filled water bottles or jumbo soup cans in each hand. Lie facedown with your arms extended to the sides, elbows slightly bent. Your gaze should fall about a foot in front of you. Lift your hands a few inches and squeeze your shoulder blades together. Lower hands back down, but do not let them touch the floor. Do three sets of ten. ●

upper-body shapers