

In my nine years living in Jackson, I have trained 25 plus pregnant women during different stages of their tri mester. I am proud that three (not all at once of course) more, two still in their first trimester and one trying, have trusted T2BB to steer their training while in one of the most important events of their life. Enter core strength!! The core, in my opinion, is everything between and around your armpit and that little bone that pots out from the side of your hip, which includes shoulders blades and glutes muscles.

For most of those who have read News and Guide T2BB articles you understand the core is regarded as one of the major aspect of training. I would like to present a different look of how training the core is vital to post partum women.

First time mothers often tell me that they would like their children two years apart from birthday to birthday. As a trainer, I think about the core and what it has to endure. I often reply and say “what about your body?” “Shouldn’t you give your body some rest and build up your core?” and the usual reply is, “I am...I giving my body two years.” Well, actually that could be misunderstood.

Let’s use my recent birth date September 18th 2009 as the day of birth for a first time mother. The body just endured 40 weeks of pregnancy (since December 2008) with your organs lifted up, hormones at full mass, uterus expanded, joints loosen, and not to mention the weight gain.

It is my understanding that breast feeding usually last 12 months after a baby is born. Hormones are still kicking to produce breast milk and baby fat weight is slowly reducing. Remember, extra body weight is needed after birth to help produce milk. So let’s say one stops the production of milk at 10 months. It is now July 2010. The body just started to get “itself” back. I recommend that the body should be given a year for recovery post breast feeding not birth. The body has been changing since December 2008, almost two years. And if you get pregnant in December of 2010 to time the children two years apart, then the body, in particular the core, has had only 6 months to recover before it undergoes the grueling but wonderful experience of pregnancy again.

This is where the strength of the core needs to excel, the time after breast feeding. After a year of recovery and working hard on the core, then the body can prepare for conception again. I feel women who keep their core strong have less pelvic dysfunctions, constance, and happier about their body after two children. It also carries over for a third child.

So many mothers visit T2BB with goals to return to marathons, competitvie mountain biking, skiing after having a child but can not maintain core stability during simple movements because adequate training for the core did not take place. Sttabilization of the core must continue forever...just like we eat everyday, we must work on your core everyday. Not to say it must be die hard but standing tall over the course of the day is working on your core.

An exercise for the core, I love to perform for everyone, especially post partum mothers is the 3 pt lift. **Starting Position: On your hands and feet on floor. Movement:** 1. Lift one hand parallel to floor (hold 1 second). 2. Return and repeat with other hand. 3. Lift one-foot parallel to floor (hold 1 second). 4. Return and repeat with other foot. 5. Repeat for 6 lifts for each limb. **Considerations:** Keep core stationary during movement, engage entire core. If exercise is too difficult, reduce limb lift. **You Should Feel:** Activation of glutes, abs, upper/lower back, entire legs. **Progression 1:** Lift opposite hand and foot simultaneously.

As an off shoot concept, I recently celebrated my 7th anniversary of being 29 years old and one birthday card stated that “Remember, age in all in your mind...the trick is to keep it from creeping down into your body!” It is true, to what degree to we push our bodies to where those bumps and bruises catch up to us. What “living in the moment” experience will forever prevent us from continuing movement the way we would like to move without those little aches and pain? A good help in this is core strength

I have this saying that describes balance of training or just life in general. “Live for the moment, based on your past, for the future. Without getting too philosophical, it begins with the strength of the core. All power is generated from the core and the body cannot live without everything inside the core.

Whether you are having your first child or fourth, whether your getting ready for ski performance or in the mist of ski season, always, always have core stability. Have a wonderful autumn.