

IWO4.RAI04
17.09.23

Postnatal exercise

Research project



Aleksander Forsberg

Christoffer Skoe

Jonatan Jåsund

Index

3. **Background & context + goals**
4. **Timeline**
5. **Research methods**
6. **Literature reviews**
7. **SWOT analysis**
8. **Survey**
9. **Interviews**
10. **Collected research data**
11. **Affinity map**
12. **Summary**



Background & context

UK based Baby Center surveyed mothers and found that:

- 2/5 feel self-conscious around their partner
- 1/3 feel that their confidence has hit rock bottom

In order to create an app to help mothers avoid or address these issues we need to better understand postnatal exercise and the possible target users through research.

What role does postnatal exercise play in mental and physical recovery?
How can we best provide a beneficial solution?

Goals

- Who are our target users?
- What are the main/common struggles caused by childbirth?
- When is the optimal time to begin exercising after childbirth?
- Where can new mothers exercise?
- Why should mothers begin exercising in the postnatal period?
- How is the topic currently being addressed?



Timeline

Monday

Define research goals

Create screener
Create survey

Create screener
Recruit participants
Write script
Create consent form

Conduct literature reviews

Tuesday

Conduct competitive analysis

Post and monitor survey

Conduct interviews with 3 participants

Wednesday

Collect research findings

Thursday

Analyse and
synthesise data

Prepare presentation

Friday

Present to stakeholders

Research methods

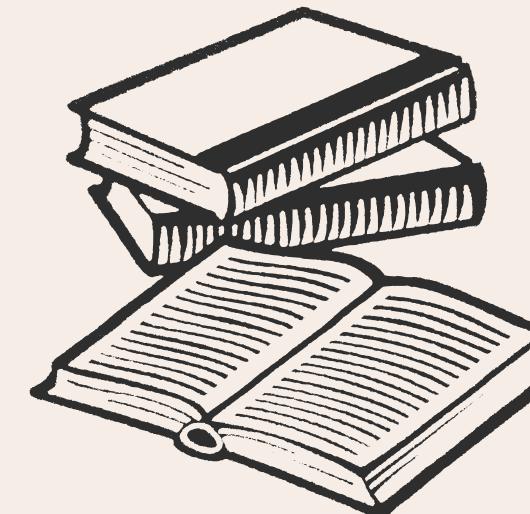


01 Literature reviews
secondary generative

02 Competitive analysis
primary evaluative

03 User interviews
primary exploratory

Literature review



- Quick, easy, and cheap to conduct
- Uncovers what should be prioritised for primary research methods



Facts	Experience	Research method	Researcher	Date captured	Source
Who are the target user? The postnatal period begins immediately after the birth of the baby and extends up to six weeks (42 days) after birth Many women feel mostly recovered by 6-8 weeks, it may take longer than this.	Neutral	Literature review	Jonatan B. Jásund	13.09.23	https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov
What are the main struggles caused by childbirth. Postpartum/postnatal depression and/or "baby blues"	Neutral	Literature review	Jonatan B. Jásund	13.09.23	https://familydoctor.org/recovering-from-childbirth/baby-blues
When can mothers exercise after birth? You can start gentle exercise as soon as you feel up to it, but usually a good idea to wait until after your 6-week postnatal check. Some mothers can begin after two weeks, while others might need more than six weeks. Some gentle abdominal exercises might be started nearly immediately after birth	Positive	Literature review	Aleksander Forsberg	13.09.23	https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/postnatal-exercise-after-birth/
Where can mothers of infants exercise? At home or local health clubs, gyms or yoga studios. Many offer postpartum exercise classes suitable for new moms as well as daycare or even classes with the baby.	Neutral	Literature review	Jonatan B. Jásund	14.09.23	
Why should mothers begin exercising in the postnatal period? It helps strengthen and tone abdominal muscles, it may help prevent postpartum depression and it can help you lose the extra weight you may gained during pregnancy Abdominal exercises are very effective in reducing diastasis recti in early postpartum women and inter recti distance. Pram-walking exercise programme in reducing depressive symptomatology for postnatal women	Positive	Literature review	Aleksander Forsberg	13.09.23	https://www.acog.org/women-and-newborns/postpartum-care/exercising-after-delivery
How can postnatal mothers approach exercise? Mothers who have had a c-section or complications during birth should consult their healthcare provider before beginning exercises	Positive	Literature review	Christoffer Skoe	13.09.23	https://www.researchgate.net/publication/339077077
	Positive	Literature review	Christoffer Skoe	13.09.23	https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/9781119237332.ch1
	Neutral	Literature review	Jonatan B. Jásund	14.09.23	https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/pregnancy-and-birth/in-depth/postpartum-care/art-20046408

Competitive analysis

S.W.O.T

Moms into fitness

Strengths

- Allows users to preview their full catalogue before subscribing.
- Videos can be downloaded.
- Supports a wide range of devices.

Weaknesses

- Offers no free workouts or exercises.

Opportunities

- Unlock the first workout of programs to give the user a taste of what's offered in them, instead of 7-day trial.

Threats

- Other apps allow the user to unlock single programs for cheap one-time fee.

The healthy mummy

Strengths

- Tracks from other apps. Garmin, fitbit polar etc.
- Shows daily meals and recipes
- Wide range of programs.

Weaknesses

- Offers no free workouts or exercises.
- Short trial version

Opportunities

- Have 1-2 free training and meal programs, so people can really try it.

Threats

- Cheaper apps that does the same thing.
- Easier apps on the market.

Prenatal Yoga | Down Dog

Strengths

- Provides a personalized plan with exercises based on the user's needs.
- Allows downloads for offline sessions.

Weaknesses

- Short trial version.
- Expencive subscrption.

Opportunities

- Offer a wider range of subscription with less costly alternatives.

Threats

- Only offers yoga exersices, so there is a threat of being redundant.
- Other cheaper competitors on the market.

Survey

We conducted a survey to get some more research data. 45 participants answering question about postnatal exercises.



45 respondents

[Link to full dataset](#)

- 55 % of the respondent are 25-34 years
- 56.25% didn't feel they got enough information about exercising during the postnatal period
- Majority approached with Walking, abdominal exercises and kegel exercises
- 37.5 % of the participants used a training app during the postnatal period.



Interviews

To understand the primary user and their needs, it will be conducted interviews. This will help us gather insights into their preferences and pain points.



3 participants

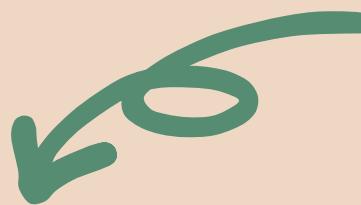
Participant 1 Link to assets
31 years old | 1,5 years since birth

Participant 2 Link to assets
29 years old | 1 year since birth

Participant 3 Link to assets
25 years old | 6 months since birth

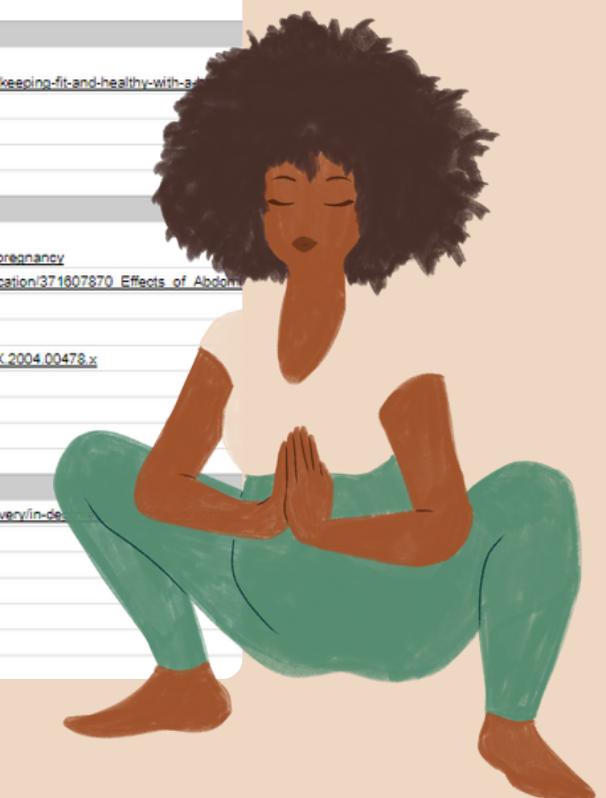
Collecting research data

We made a spreadsheet where we collected data from the literature review, survey and the interviews together to get a better overview

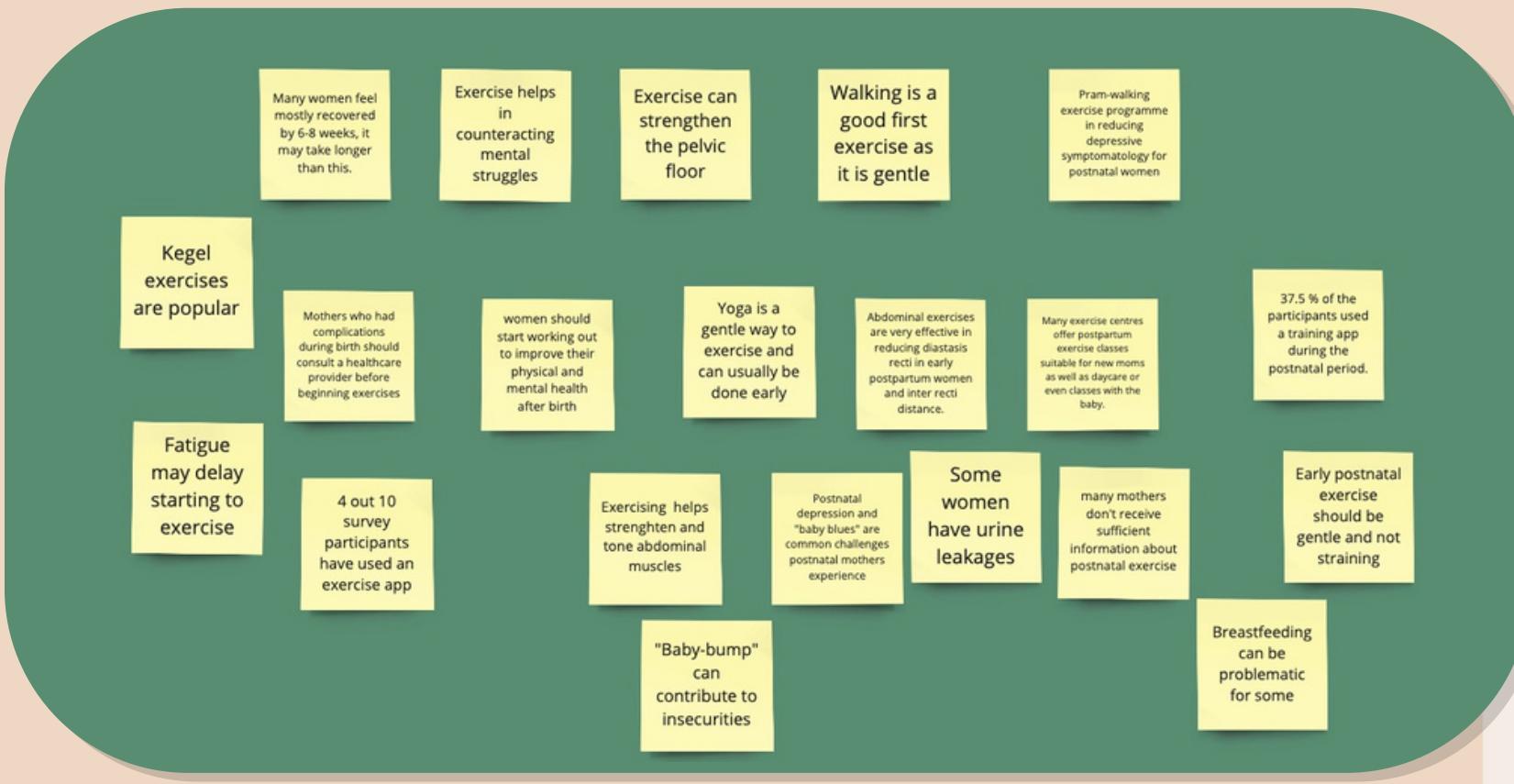


Spreadsheet

Facts	Experience	Research met	Researcher	Date capture	Source
Who are the target user? The postnatal period begins immediately after the birth of the baby and extends up to six weeks (42 days) after birth Many women feel mostly recovered by 6-8 weeks, it may take longer than this. 55 % of the respondent are 25-34 years	Neutral Neutral Neutral	Literature review Literature review Survey	Jonatan B. Jåsund Jonatan B. Jåsund All	13.09.23 13.09.23 14.09.23	https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK310595/ https://familydoctor.org/recovering-from-delivery/ Survey results
What are the main struggles caused by childbirth. Postpartum/postnatal depression and/or "baby blues" Insecurities, post-baby bump, "the baby blues" Fatigue, tight pelvic floor, diastasis, postpartum depression 56.25% didn't feel they got enough information about exercising during the postnatal period PPS, PPD, hemorrhoids, pain from C-section, fatigue, struggles breastfeeding, colostomy, baby blues and post baby bump, leaking urine	Negative Negative Negative Negative Negative	Literature review Interview Interview Survey Survey	Jonatan B. Jåsund Aleksander Forsberg Christoffer Skoe All All	13.09.23 12.09.23 12.09.23 14.09.23 14.09.23	https://www.beaumont.org/services/womens-services/maternity/after-pregnancy/moms-health/o https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8530333/ https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8530333/ Survey results Survey results
When can mothers exercise after birth? You can start gentle exercise as soon as you feel up to it, but usually a good idea to wait until after your 6-week postnatal check. Some mothers can begin after two weeks, while others might need more than six weeks. Some gentle abdominal exercises might be started nearly immediately after birth Some weeks after birth	Positive Neutral Neutral	Literature review Literature review Interview	Aleksander Forsberg Jonatan B. Jåsund Christoffer Skoe	13.09.23 14.09.23 12.09.23	https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/support-and-services/keeping-fit-and-healthy-with-a-baby/ Survey results Participant 2
Where can mothers of infants exercise? At home or local health clubs, gyms or yoga studios. Many offer postpartum exercise classes suitable for new moms as well as daycare or even classes with the baby. Outside, at home or at the cabin, or at the gym At home or at SATS (gym) Gym with yoga classes and at home Gym, outside, home or at a yoga studio	Positive Neutral Neutral Neutral Positive	Literature review Interview Interview Interview Survey	Aleksander Forsberg Christoffer Skoe Aleksander Forsberg Aleksander Forsberg All	13.09.23 12.09.23 12.09.23 12.09.23 14.09.23	https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8530333/ https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8530333/ https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8530333/ https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8530333/ Survey results
Why should mothers begin exercising in the postnatal period? It helps strengthen and tone abdominal muscles, it may help prevent postpartum depression and it can help you lose the extra weight you may gained during pregnancy Abdominal exercises are very effective in reducing diastasis recti in early postpartum women and inter recti distance. To feel better and overcome "the Baby Blues" Get back in shape Pram-walking exercise programme in reducing depressive symptomatology for postnatal women It can play an important part in recovering from giving birth To get out of the house To improve their physical and mental health.	Positive Positive Positive Positive Positive Neutral Neutral Neutral	Literature review Literature review Interview Interview Interview Interview Interview Interview	Aleksander Forsberg Christoffer Skoe Aleksander Forsberg Aleksander Forsberg Christoffer Skoe Christoffer Skoe Christoffer Skoe Aleksander Forsberg	13.09.23 13.09.23 12.09.23 12.09.23 13.09.23 12.09.23 12.09.23 12.09.23	https://www.acog.org/womens-health/faqs/exercise-after-pregnancy https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8530333/ https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8530333/ https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8530333/ https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/i.1440-172X.2004.00478.x https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8530333/ https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8530333/ https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8530333/
How can postnatal mothers approach exercise? Mothers who have had a c-section or complications during birth should consult their healthcare provider before beginning exercises Start slowly with walks until feeling good enough to do Kegel and abdominal exercises. Morning walks with the baby, abdominal and Kegel exercises to strengthen the pelvic floor Start with yoga and walks, and some abdominal exercises Begin as early as possible to help counter baby blues Majority approached with Walking, abdominal exercises and kegel exercises 37.5 % of the participants used a training app during the postnatal period.	Neutral Neutral Positive Neutral Positive Positive Positive Neutral	Literature review Interview Interview Interview Interview Survey Survey	Jonatan B. Jåsund Aleksander Forsberg Aleksander Forsberg Aleksander Forsberg Aleksander Forsberg All All	14.09.23 12.09.23 12.09.23 12.09.23 12.09.23 14.09.23 14.09.23	https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/labor-and-delivery/in-depth/c-section/a00000 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8530333/ https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8530333/ https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8530333/ https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8530333/ Survey result Survey result



Affinity Map



How and why should postnatal mothers exercise?

Exercises	Timing	Location	Physical and mental issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kegel exercises are popular Walking is a good first exercise as it is gentle Early postnatal exercise should be gentle and not straining Exercise can strengthen the pelvic floor Exercising helps strengthen and tone abdominal muscles Pram-walking exercise programme can help in reducing depressive symptomatology for postnatal women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many women feel mostly recovered by 6-8 weeks, it may take longer than this. Mothers who had complications during birth should consult a healthcare provider before beginning exercises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yoga can easily be done anywhere Walking outside gives the added benefit of fresh air 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Baby-bump" can contribute to insecurities Fatigue may delay starting to exercise women should start working out to improve their physical and mental health after birth Postnatal depression and "baby blues" are common challenges postnatal mothers experience Some women have urine leakages Exercise helps with counteracting mental struggles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exercising helps strengthen and tone abdominal muscles Postnatal depression and "baby blues" are common challenges postnatal mothers experience many mothers don't receive sufficient information about postnatal exercise Breastfeeding can be problematic for some 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many exercise centres offer postpartum exercise classes suitable for new moms as well as daycare or even classes with the baby. many mothers don't receive sufficient information about postnatal exercise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practical tips for postnatal mothers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical and mental issues

Key insights

- Fresh mothers need to be better informed about postnatal exercise
 - Exercise helps many women in recovering physically and mentally from birth
 - Having a baby entails many sacrifices
 - The different postnatal stages entail varied types and intensities of exercises
 - All people are different. Mothers should therefore discuss the topic with their doctors
 - Exercising while pregnant can make postnatal exercise easier
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- Better understand how prenatal exercises can improve postnatal recovery
 - Dive further into depth of what exercises that are proven to be the most efficient
 - Research how postnatal exercises can prevent “baby blues” and help with mental health
 - Get a better understanding of how to differentiate from competitors in the market

Recommended further research