

TURNER'S TOP 10 TIPS...

Beverley shares her advice on pregnancy, childbirth and motherhood

- 1** Go for a natural birth if you can. It's safer for you and the baby, and it releases hormones that make it easier to conceive again in the future.
- 2** If somebody starts telling you a horror story about giving birth, politely ask them to stop. Fear will only make you tense.
- 3** For a positive outlook on childbirth, join a hypnobirthing group. See www.hypnobirthing.co.uk for more information.
- 4** Do gentle exercise such as swimming, yoga and pilates during your pregnancy to help keep you fit for labour.
- 5** Exercise your pelvic floor muscles pre-birth as well as after to help avoid damage – carrying a baby puts them under a huge strain.
- 6** Consider natural alternatives to pain-killing epidurals, such as massage, hypnotherapy, aromatherapy or a water birth. Drugs can create a vicious cycle – they often slow labour down so you need to take yet more drugs to speed the process up.
- 7** Breast-feed. It gives your baby the best possible start, plus it burns calories and helps pull your stomach muscles back into shape.
- 8** Lose weight through exercise rather than crash dieting. If you're not eating enough, it will affect the quality of your breast milk and will leave you feeling even more tired.
- 9** Give your body time to recover. It's normal to have a pouchy tum after giving birth, and it will go eventually if you eat healthily and exercise regularly.
- 10** Keep sight of you and your partner as a couple, not just as parents – don't feel guilty about making time for yourself.

DO YOUR FLOOR WORK

The pelvic floor is a 'hammock' of muscle stretching from the pubic bone to the base of the spine. It supports your pelvic organs, and squeezes up when you cough, laugh or sneeze to prevent urine leaking. However, if it's weakened, you can develop stress incontinence. The good news is it's possible to repair the damage by exercising the pelvic floor (to find it, stop yourself weeing mid-flow). Squeeze for as long and hard as you can, aiming for a hold of 10 seconds. Do 10 contractions six times a day.

To ensure you're doing it right, try the new **Vielle Pelvic Floor Toning System**. £19.95 – the vaginal toner will only move in the right direction if you're flexing the right muscles. You can expect to notice a difference in 2-3 weeks. For info, see www.vielle.co.uk.



Croyde with mum Bev, co-presenter of Radio Five Live's Saturday morning show with Eamonn Holmes