



Loose Skin or Deep Core? Weekly Check

Tell what is skin and what is core this week, and start the one gentle routine that helps both heal.

Signs: skin, core, or both

- Lie on your back, knees bent. Pinch the belly skin above the navel: skin only moves, no bulge underneath.
- Lift your head slightly. A ridge or dome along the midline means the deep core needs work, not just skin.
- Press 2 fingers above the navel on a slow exhale. 2 fingers or less that feels firm is a normal gap.
- Loose skin looks the same lying or standing. A core issue widens standing and bulges when you cough.
- In the first 12 weeks both are expected. Skin keeps tightening for months; waiting is not failing.
- Faint stretch marks and crepey texture are skin changes. Exercise does not remove them; time fades them.

Steps: daily 10-minute core routine

- 1 Week 1 on: 360 breathing. Inhale ribs wide, exhale slowly drawing belly in. 10 breaths, 3 times a day.
- 2 Week 2 on: on the exhale, gently lift pelvic floor and draw lower belly in. Hold 5 seconds, 10 reps.
- 3 Week 3 on: heel slides. Exhale, brace, slide one heel out and back. 8 per side, keep the belly flat.
- 4 Week 4 on: walk 10 to 20 minutes daily, posture tall, ribs stacked over hips.
- 5 Week 6 on: glute bridges, 10 reps on the exhale. No crunches or sit-ups until the gap is firm and small.
- 6 Stop any move where the belly domes or you leak. Go back one step for a week.

Checklist: what actually helps skin

- ☐ Drink water with every feed; aim for a full bottle each time you sit down to nurse or bottle-feed.
- ☐ Protein at each meal (eggs, yogurt, beans, chicken) so skin and muscle have what they need to rebuild.
- ☐ Moisturize the belly once a day; it eases itch and tightness, though no cream shrinks skin.
- ☐ Lose weight slowly, if at all: no crash diets, especially while breastfeeding. Steady is kinder to skin.
- ☐ Sunscreen on the belly at the pool or beach; new stretch marks darken in sun.
- ☐ Give it 6 to 12 months before judging. Reassess at 3, 6 and 12 months, not weekly.

Weekly Skin and Core Log

Date	Gap (fingers)	Breath sets	Walk min	Dome or leak?

When to get help: See your OB-GYN or a pelvic floor physical therapist if the gap is wider than 3 fingers, the belly domes with every lift, or you leak past 6 weeks.