

Here's what doctors have to say about pregnant model with six-pack abs

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Her baby is due in 10 days, but that isn't stopping pregnant model Sarah Stage from showing off her washboard abs and barely there baby bump.

While plenty of women take pregnancy selfies to document their progress, Stage's photos are stirring up controversy among her 1.1 million followers on social media. Some spectators are celebrating her toned body, but critics are questioning the plausibility and safety of her pregnancy. Here's what doctors have to say about her body and baby's health.

For the most part, they say that Stage's physique is the real deal and attainable for other expectant moms. Genetics, your eating habits and physical health going into the pregnancy, and your exercise regime are just some of the factors at play.

Franci Cohen, a personal trainer, exercise physiologist and certified nutritionist, told *Cosmopolitan* magazine that a woman's health going into her pregnancy is a crucial factor in determining how fit she is during the nine months of gestation.

"The main thing is, before going into your pregnancy, I would say get as fit as you can. Any doctor will tell you continue, for the most part, at the same level you were," she told the women's magazine. "I saw [Sarah's] body, and I know people like that. A lot of it has to do with genetics and if she's watching her diet and is extremely fit, and she's genetically predisposed to carry small to begin with, then it's three things in her favour," Cohen explained.

Light exercise is okay as long as you aren't straining yourself or throwing yourself off balance, she suggested. Doctors caution naysayers: because she's maintained her toned physique, it doesn't necessarily mean that she's unhealthy.

"She's obviously in excellent shape and her abdominal muscles might have remained so strong during her pregnancy that they simply mask her growing uterus from view. She could also have pelvic bones that provide a lot of room for the uterus to expand inward, rather than outward," Dr. Alyssa Dweck, an ob-gyn, told *Women's Health* magazine.

"The fact that she looks skinny on Instagram does not mean her baby growth is restricted or too small. It has nothing to do if you can see her muscles, if her uterus is the perfect size, and she has gained an amount of weight that is acceptable," Ashton said.