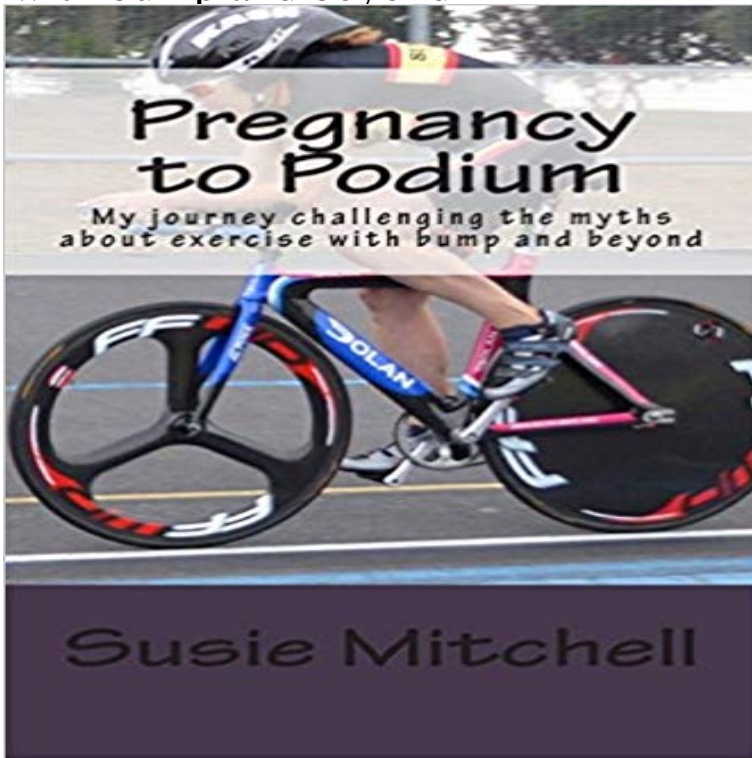


# Pregnancy to Podium: My journey challenging the myths about exercise with bump and beyond



Susie Mitchell is a 37 year first time mom to a lovely vibrant baby girl Tori. Always enjoying the challenge of trying her hand at different sports, she discovered track cycling in July of 2011. After failing to make her mark in anything from shot putt to surfing, it finally seemed she had found something she was good at. Then two months later she became pregnant. Having set her sights on competing in the World Masters Track Cycling Championships the following October, she needed a plan. It would come four months after the birth and she wanted to be ready to give a good account of herself. Wanting to train properly throughout her pregnancy, she looked for and found lots of advice but was alarmed at how conservative views on exercise were during this time. The advice of gentle jogging or easy swimming wasn't appealing. Being both a vet and scientist with a background in research she decided to look into it herself and focus on what the science said as her guide. Through this, a healthy dose of common sense and the help of her coach, she found a way to maintain and improve her fitness while training through all stages of her pregnancy and post-partum. Her return to form came so much quicker than anyone could have expected, winning a National Medal just 6 weeks after the birth. She added others in the following months and went from strength to strength culminating in winning a title in the Individual Pursuit at the World Masters Track Championships in Manchester just a few months after Tori arrived. She had somehow managed to achieve her lifelong goal of sporting success in any discipline, and had pregnancy to thank for it. Susie showed that it is not only possible to stay fit and healthy by exercising through your pregnancy but that you could turn pregnancy to your advantage during training. The physiological changes in the body during this time mean training with

baby on board is akin to training at altitude. Only a lot cheaper and easier to do! By staying somewhat immersed in her sport, she also reaped another unforeseen benefit she succeeded in maintain her identity through it all. Staying fit and getting back on the bike post-partum was one of the things that kept her sane, when coping with the biggest shock to the system anyone can have becoming a mom for the first time. All of this was made possible by the help of a very supportive husband, Cormac. She is now back at work as a fish vet, travelling all around Ireland, visiting fish farms and jumping on and off trawlers. She tries to balance working, being a mum and enjoying her sport, a bit of a juggling act at times. Wanting to help other women like her during their pregnancies, she wrote the book she would have liked to read.

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