

The ultrasound of music

YOUR baby is not cooperating.” And just like that, an intense wave of Helicopter-Tiger-Mama-ness passed over me, a defensive glint in my eye as I too-assertively asked the woman on the other line to repeat herself.

I wanted to give her a chance to take it back.

“We are going to have to charge you double for another full ultrasound work-up... because YOUR baby didn’t cooperate the first time,” asserted the woman back at me, no question the ‘YOUR’ was in all caps, vocally.

But almost apologetically, she quipped as she awkwardly cleared her throat, “That’s what my boss said to say.”

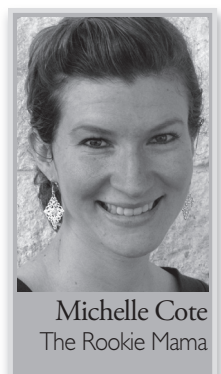
My third baby hasn’t even been born yet, and he’s evidently already up to no good, a mischievous little guy undoubtedly

donning a dunce cap in his time-out womb.

Time-out from what? It’s not like he has anywhere else to go for another four-ish months.

My 20-week ultrasound had been a full work-up determining gender and overall health via lengthy measurements as I squirmed for two hours and my baby kicked gleefully from his built-in bounce house.

Everything seemed good-to-go in utero, save for the fact that the sonographer couldn’t quite get enough photos of heart angles toward our fabulous photo shoot’s end, because quite literally Baby Cote was



Michelle Cote
The Rookie Mama

Mommy’s Corner

a small handful of hearty snapshots.

The haughty ‘YOUR baby is not cooperating’ pointing of fingers was unconvincing, but still I went.

And during my second ultrasound a week later, still my stubborn babe cuddled into a tight little ball, wiggling his toes and giving two thumbs up for the camera.

Such a ham like his big bros.

I was sent out to walk the halls with my husband, rocking all my best lunge moves as I quite literally put my best food forward and resembled a yoga student doing the Robot.

I did everything short of back handsprings in attempt to move the baby’s womb position, a move which vaguely reminded me of walking hospital halls three years earlier in attempt to ‘naturally’ induce labor.

My father-in-law had walked the halls with me that day, teaching me his old high

cuddled up tightly in fetal position.

I had rolled from side to side, walked up and down hospital halls with my husband, had my stomach uncomfortably probed and pressed upon by a sweet but increasingly impatient ultrasound technician, who perplexedly used her free hand to alternately wipe her brow and frustratingly type codes and keys into her computer.

My out-of-pocket pay wasn’t cheap.

And yet when the hospital office left me a voicemail the next day indicating my not-yet-born son was selected for a call-back, I was the one who became immersed in theatrics, as I reacted to their explanation as to why I’d have to fork over double the cost for another entire 20-week work-up, despite their only needing

school football practice warm-ups to try to help me induce labor before I was eventually hooked up to pitocin machines.

You see, I haven’t yet held this child in my arms.

But I already get him. He’s already familiarly one of our boys, through and through.

Our first two were also stubborn, each induced after 42 weeks of exercising squatter’s rights.

This one was not going to budge for an ultrasound, no matter how gymnastic my graceless hallways moves got.

At one point, my husband and I meandered by a woman sitting at a desk.

“Can I help you? Are you looking for something?” she asked, shooting us an odd look.

The sonographer was looking for something certainly, but I was the one clad in leggings and a flowing shirt, seemingly warming up for bizarre aerobics.

I politely shook my head,

‘No’, and my husband and I continued our looping journey around the hospital as I stretched, lunged, and even attempted to reenact first- and second- position ballet moves from forever ago as I clutched the barre— er, handrail.

Sometimes doctor’s appointments don’t go quite as you expect.

Sometimes you end up finding yourself foolishly looking like a Thriller extra in medical quarters.

So when it comes down to this, you just have to laugh and don’t just stand there, bust a move.

Now back to my pliés, if you will.

— Michelle Cote is the creative director of the Journal Tribune and a nationally-syndicated columnist. She enjoys cooking, baking, and living room dance-offs with her husband, two boys and a dog. She can be contacted at mcote@journaltribune.com.

We need a spare spare room

It’s taken us only six months to finish painting the spare bedroom, aka First Born’s former bedroom, but it has reached the final stretch. This newly painted room is an experiment for me, as I have zero vision when it comes to decorating. I’m not calling my sister for advice. We didn’t paint this room the same



Janine Talbot
Mom of Many Words

color, or even a related color, to the other rooms in our home. There is even an accent wall, something I’ve never before envisioned or attempted. I’m picking out new curtains and possibly some artwork, just like a grown-up with taste. It’s important that it looks like a guest room and not a rummage sale. We’ve collected a tad too much rummage over the years.

By the time you read this we should be moving furniture back into the room. Unfortunately, there was a whole lot more than furniture in there.

My old electric piano, which hasn’t been touched in a couple of years, was still

set up and surrounded by my dad’s old fake books. From a large box of clothes ready to be donated, I ended up pulling two pairs of pants to wear for painting. I collected several envelopes of school pictures of various sizes taken over the years for both girls. Exactly how many relatives did I think I was going to send these to?

We removed the white shelving originally intended to store my winter sweaters and pants, due to lack of closet space (which I may have mentioned). It hadn’t taken long for the shelves to become the drop point for old notebooks from both kids’ school days, empty picture frames, and magazines I swear I’m going to read. If you glance into Second Born’s room today, you would see that her bed is the new drop point.

The scariest discovery of all

— to the surprise of nobody — was under the bed. When Spouse and I moved the bed out, we uncovered shoe boxes crammed with small toys, stuffed animals, cards, middle school notes and photos. Even though I was sure every shoe box that entered this house was used for a school project, First Born somehow managed to fill several of them and “file” them out of sight. Until now.

Among the treasures were photographs from unidentified destinations that I don’t recall visiting, pieces from an aerobic stepper I’m pretty sure I donated to a church fair, and cards from First Born’s first birthday and baptism. The latter will probably remain hidden away for a while. If Second Born gets wind of the cards, I’ll have to go on a search for the collection of cards from her first birthday

and baptism. Based on the fact that I was a little more tired the second time around, I am not totally convinced there is such a collection.

I resorted to sending a photo of one collection of things to First Born, asking if she wanted them. Naturally, she would like to hold onto them until the next time she and The Groom visit. They have no such plans for 2017. Sigh.

At the moment, Second Born’s room could be mistaken for an indoor flea market, featuring a bedrail, mattress and box spring that block the doorway. We have two week-ends to clean it out before she gets home. Funny how I think of the next time we see her as still so far away ... until I realize what has to get done if she wants to enter her room. Her

cat has been sleeping on top of the pile of blankets that are covering her bed. She’s the only one that could possibly climb over the many obstacles blocking the way.

The fact is we need another spare room, or two more closets (did I mention the lack of closet space?). Since that’s not going to happen I will continue to purge some items and find new hiding places for others. For a brief moment, I thought a new location had been discovered. Then I remembered Second Born has carried on the tradition.

There isn’t a spare inch under her bed either.

— Janine Talbot is adjusting to her empty nest in southern Maine with her spouse of 32 years and two and a half cats. She can be reached at janinevtalbot@gmail.com.

York County HEALTH & WELLNESS

NATIONAL FITNESS/HEALTHY BODIES MONTH - MAY 2017

Springtime Walking/Running Programs

Wayne R. Lamarre, M.Ed., LAT, ATC
Heath R. Pierce, M.Ed., RSCC*D, CSCS*D, NSCA-CPT*D, ACSM EP-C

Increasing temperatures and receding piles of snow have created an almost giddy need to be outside in southern Maine, and the number of walkers, runners and bikers has exponentially increased in the last two weeks. As Mainers awake from what seemed like an exceptionally long hibernation, here are some things to consider as you resume or begin an exercise regimen.

Medical Clearance: Before you begin, be sure to consult with your physician if you have any past medical condition that could be exacerbated with physical activity.

Clothing/Footwear: If you intend to exercise at a level that makes you sweat for longer than 15 minutes, clothing made of blended, moisture-wicking material is recommended over cotton fabric.

Conventional wisdom usually dictates that more expensive equals higher quality, but that doesn’t necessarily apply to footwear. In fact, a study conducted by the American Orthopaedic Foot and Ankle Society found that there was no significant difference between a \$20 shoe and a \$120 shoe when it came to injury prevention.

What is important is to understand is what type of shoe is the most appropriate for your particular foot and situation. For

example, are you an overpronator? A simple way to screen for this is to pay close attention to the type of footprint you leave when exiting a pool/shower/bathtub. Is the entire sole of the foot visible, or is the resulting print more crescent-shaped? “Flat” feet leave a full sole print, which often correspond to overpronation, and require a shoe that provides more stability. Exceedingly high arches typically leave a crescent-shaped print and correlate to a foot that doesn’t absorb shock well, in which case a cushion shoe makes more sense.

Frequency/Duration: Now that you’re outfitted properly, the next step is to determine the frequency, intensity, and time, the FIT Principle, of your program. Based on the American College of Sports Medicine’s, or ACSM, Guidelines for Exercise Testing

and Prescription (2016), you should exercise three times per week for 20 minutes at a vigorous level or five times per week for 30-50 minutes if you’re working moderately. An excellent way to determine the difference between moderate and vigorous exercise is the Talk Test. If you’re able to talk and sing while exercising, you’re working at a low level. Moderate exercisers can talk but not sing. If you can’t say more than a few words at a time, you’re working at a vigorous level. Maintaining this level of breathlessness for 20-50 minutes 3-5 times per week has been proven to promote long-term cardiovascular fitness and weight loss. A word of caution, however: If you experience lightheadedness, extreme breathlessness, dizziness, severe muscle or joint discomfort, chest pain or pressure, or nausea you should stop exercising and seek medical attention.

Injury Prevention: One of the greatest pitfalls to beginning or resuming a walking/running program is to overdo it. This can result in injuries to the foot, ankle, knee or hips that may thwart your fitness or



Finding your fit

It’s more than skinny jeans

There are so many conflicting messages about fitness out there, it led us to wonder, what is fitness really? Is it the number on a scale? Or a measure of how strong you are? Or could there be a deeper meaning to fitness, something that transcends the physical?

We reached out to members of the Y community to ask what fitness means to them.

One of the first things we noticed was that no one said, “Fitness is fitting into a pair of skinny jeans.” Instead, fitness is about their ability to connect with their loved ones and to engage in activities that are meaningful to them. It’s also about feeling good — mentally, emotionally, and physically.

It’s likely that you’re used to hearing about the obesity epidemic when people talk about fitness, and the numbers are truly alarming — 70 percent of US adults are obese or

overweight, while one in five children is obese. This has a terrible impact on well-being, not only because risk of heart attack, diabetes, cancer, and stroke goes up when weight does, but also because we typically see an increase in social isolation, depression, and low self-esteem, too. In other words, a lack of fitness impacts not just a person’s body, but also other key aspects of their well-being, including the ability to connect with loved ones and engage in meaningful activities.

Remember fitness is an ongoing journey, not a race to the finish line; the journey frequently includes detours, retraced steps, and unexpected adventures.

Second, if you’re making new lifestyle changes, especially if you’re on medication or have a medical condition, you should check in with your healthcare practitioner.

Third, fitness is not an “all or nothing” equation — small changes can have a major impact on well-being. For instance, a regular walk can reduce anxiety, alleviate depression, AND increase energy.

To get an idea of how a small change can have a big impact on your life, let’s dive into that walk together. First, with longer, warmer days, it’s the perfect time to walk outside. This gets us out into nature, fresh air, and sunshine, all of which can inspire us and give us a sense of meaning — two important components to well-being. Second, walking with a friend, neighbor, or family member has a great social aspect, giving us a sense of belonging and a chance to deepen relationships — two more pieces important to cultivating a sense of fitness and well-being. Finally, walking gets us up and moving — our hearts pumping, our endorphins (the “feel good” hormones) flowing, and our muscles contracting. Physical activity is another crucial piece of the fitness and well-being puzzle.

The YMCA of Southern Maine offers activities and classes to suit a variety of interests, and is a warm and welcoming community.

— The YMCA of Southern Maine is a nonprofit organization.

weight loss goal. Knee and hip pain often result from overuse of muscles and tendons due to excessive stride length or poor/failing footwear. When in doubt,

shorten your stride and be sure to replace walking/running shoes when necessary (300-500 miles). Look for pain, redness, swelling or stiffness, and taper

back the walking/running if any occur. Beginning with a proper warm up and cool down will also go a long way to minimizing injury.

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