

Diabetes and Exercise



Exercise includes anything that gets you moving. This includes walking, dancing, or working in the yard. It is possible to exercise without going to a gym. Exercise improves your health both body and mind. Exercise helps your own insulin to work better to improve your blood sugar levels. Exercise can also help with weight loss allowing you to move around easier. Exercise is important in diabetes self-management.

Benefits of Exercise

- Lowers blood sugar levels
- Lowers blood pressure
- Lowers cholesterol
- Reduces risk of heart disease and stroke
- Relieves stress
- Strengthens muscles, heart, and bones
- Makes insulin work better
- Improves blood flow
- Keeps joints flexible
- Helps with weight loss



Chances to Be Active Throughout the Day

- Walk instead of driving or taking the bus
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator
- Work in the yard
- Clean the house



**Talk with your doctor before beginning any type of exercise program

Exercise and Blood Sugar

- Exercise helps lower blood sugar, so you should always keep a source of quick acting carbohydrate with you. Some examples are glucose tabs, glucose gel, or hard candy.
- Carry identification and wear a medical alert necklace or bracelet that will let others know that you have diabetes.
- Check your blood sugar often: Have a snack before exercise if blood sugar is less than 100. Have a snack after exercise if blood sugar is less than 70.
- Watch for signs of hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) up to 24 hours after exercising

Ideas for Exercise

Aerobic exercise increases heart rate, works muscles, and raises breathing rate. Aim for 30 minutes a day at least 5 days a week. Start slowly; you can begin exercising 5-10 minutes a day and work up to more time each week. For weight loss, you may want to exercise more than 30 minutes a day.

Examples of aerobic exercise:

- Brisk walk
- Dancing
- Aerobics class
- Swimming
- Biking



Strength Training and Stretching are also important. Strength training help build strong muscles and bones. Stretching improves flexibility and helps keep joints moving which reduces your chances of injury.

Exercise Tips:

Avoid exercise if ill

Avoid exercise if your blood sugar is 400 or higher

Always remember to wear shoes that fit properly

Wear clean white socks

After exercise check your feet for signs of cracks or sores

Avoid exercise if foot ulcers are present



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