

# Physical Activity and Diabetes

## Benefits of physical activity:

Physical activity has many benefits. It can help you control your blood sugar and your weight. Exercise can help prevent heart and blood flow problems.



## How to get started:

- Talk to your health care team before you begin.
- Start small. Try walking, working in the yard, or dancing.
- Start with 5 minutes at a time. As you become stronger, add a few extra minutes to your activity.
- If you feel pain, slow down or stop and wait until the pain goes away. If the pain comes back, talk with your health care provider.

## What types of physical activity are best?

All physical activity is good! Choose an activity that you enjoy and that is convenient for you. Walking is easy and you can do it almost anywhere. The only things you need are comfortable clothing, socks, and shoes that fit well. Jogging, bicycling, swimming, and dancing are also great ways to get some exercise.

## How much physical activity should I do?

- Work up to doing physical activity 5 times a week for 30 minutes at a time.
- Include strength training exercises on 2 of the days.
- During your activity, you should be able to talk without getting out of breath.
- If you are short of time or out of shape, try exercising in 10 minute segments during the day.
- Do some physical activity every day. It is better to walk 10 or 20 minutes each day than 1 hour just once a week.



## SAFE EXERCISE TIPS

**Do not exercise if your blood sugar level is too low.** Check your blood sugar before and after exercising.

**Always have a healthy high-carb snack with you in case your blood sugar level drops.**

### More safety tips:

- Drink water before, during, and after your activity.
- Protect your feet!
  - Check inside your shoes and socks for anything that might injure your feet.
  - Wear comfortable shoes and socks that fit well.
  - Check your feet after you exercise for open sores, cuts, or blisters.
  - Tell your health care provider right away if you injure your feet.
- Always carry your cell phone in case you need to call for help.
- Unless you plan to exercise at home, wear or carry identification. Your ID should state that you have diabetes and list your medicines and an emergency phone number.



## STAYING MOTIVATED

Make it fun! Make physical activity part of your daily life!

- Find an exercise buddy.
- Try a new activity.
- Walk to a bus stop 15 or 20 minutes from your house instead of using the closest one.
- Walk during your lunch break.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.

**My physical activity goal:**

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