

Diabetes: Just the Basics

Being Active

Physical activity is very important when you have diabetes. It can help control your blood sugar levels and keep your heart healthy. Most people can benefit from walking as their main form of physical activity. When walking, walk like you are late for a meeting, not just out taking a stroll. If you want to do more than that, you should talk with your healthcare provider.

Benefits of physical activity

- Improves blood sugar and blood pressure
- Lowers “bad” cholesterol (LDL)
- Raises “good” cholesterol (HDL)
- Helps with weight loss and maintenance
- Gives you more energy
- Reduces stress

Before you start

- Talk with your healthcare provider about your plans for increased activity
- Learn how to prevent low blood sugars
 - Check your blood sugar before and after physical activity
 - Carry a snack if you take insulin or medications that can lead to low blood sugar
 - Wear a medical identification bracelet or necklace
- Drink plenty of water
- Wear comfortable shoes and socks

Getting started

- Look for ways to increase your activity level during a normal day
 - Take the stairs instead of the elevator
 - Park your car farther away from your destination or get off the bus a stop earlier
- Plan for some form of daily activity
- Aim to be active for 30 minutes at least 5 days a week
 - Take 10-minute walks around your home or office, three times a day
 - Buy a pedometer and increase your steps everyday. Aim for 10,000 steps a day.

Make physical activity a part of your life!

Steps To Better Health

- If you have special needs, speak with your healthcare provider first
- Turn off the TV and the computer or exercise during commercial breaks
- Do something you enjoy!