

Exercising, eating and staying positive



It's your move

Whether you have type 2 diabetes or want to avoid developing it, a minimum of 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity exercise can help. Getting at least 30 minutes of aerobic exercise each day, at least five days a week, is an excellent plan. You don't even need to do all 30 minutes of exercise at one time, you can spread it out by trying three 10-minute blocks of exercise over the course of the day.

Try to incorporate four types of physical activity into your weekly routine: aerobic (cardio), strength training, stretching and balance. Stretching and balance are especially important as you get older. Lay out your plan for the week in advance, using the exercises on the next page as a guide. We suggest putting your physical activity into your calendar like other important appointments because nothing is more important than maintaining your health — for you and those who depend on you.

Benefits of regular physical activity

There are numerous benefits of incorporating physical activity into your daily routine, including:

- Improves insulin sensitivity (enables cells to use insulin more effectively)¹
- May prevent type 2 diabetes if you are diagnosed with prediabetes or are at high risk for developing type 2 diabetes²
- Improves blood glucose control if you have type 2 diabetes²
- Improves cardiovascular fitness²
- Reduces risk for developing heart disease, stroke, osteoporosis and certain types of cancer²
- Lowers blood pressure and triglycerides, and increases HDL ("good") cholesterol²
- Can contribute to weight loss and can help you keep weight off long term²
- Helps maintain muscle and slow the loss of bone density²
- Helps improve your mood, reduce anxiety and sleep better²

Exercises to consider²

1. **Walking:** You don't need a gym membership or expensive exercise equipment to get moving.
2. **Cycling:** This low impact exercise can help you meet your fitness goals while minimizing impact on your joints.
3. **Swimming:** Aquatic exercise can help lower blood sugar levels, much like land-based exercise does.
4. **Team sports:** An opportunity to socialize and stay on course with your physical activity.
5. **Aerobic dance:** Zumba, anyone?
6. **Weightlifting:** Strength training may also help improve your blood sugar control, reports the ADA.
7. **Resistance band exercises:** Helps strengthen your muscles.
8. **Calisthenics:** Common exercises include push-ups, pull-ups, squats, lunges and more.
9. **Pilates:** Designed to improve core strength, coordination and balance.
10. **Yoga:** Can help people with type 2 diabetes manage their blood sugar, cholesterol levels and weight. It may also help lower your blood pressure, improve the quality of your sleep and boost your mood.



Remember:

- **Work up slowly** if you're starting a new activity or increasing the level of your activity.
- **Warm up and cool down** before doing cardio and strength training.
- **Review your exercise plans with your healthcare provider**, especially if you have any other medical conditions, diabetes complications or are on medication for diabetes.

Managing your lifestyle with diabetes

Contrary to what you think or what you may have observed in others living with diabetes, we now know that having diabetes doesn't mean that you'll never eat sweets again or have a glass of wine. People with diabetes don't need to eat special "diabetic" food. You just need to make better choices and be conscious about the foods you may be eating now.³

A healthier diet and regular physical activity should help improve your mood, sense of well-being and confidence. But it isn't unusual to feel stressed or worried if you have diabetes. In fact, people with diabetes are 20 percent more likely than those without diabetes to have anxiety at some point in their life. Managing a long-term condition like diabetes is a major source of anxiety for some. Also, people with diabetes are two to three times more likely to have depression than people without diabetes.⁴

Your emotions are every bit as important as food, exercise and medication. If you feel unhappy, angry, easily frustrated, impatient, unable to participate or care about things you used to enjoy, talk to your healthcare provider. Remember, help is always available if you need it.

Sources:

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Living with Diabetes: Get Active! May 6, 2021. Available from www.cdc.gov.
2. Grey, H and Burford, M. 10 Exercises for Diabetes: Walking, Yoga, Swimming and More, April, 13, 2022. Available from www.healthline.com.
3. American Diabetes Association. Standards of Medical Care in Diabetes - 2022, Diabetes Care, January 2022. Available from www.diabetes.org.
4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Diabetes and Mental Health, May 7, 2021. Available from www.cdc.gov.

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