

Diabetes *it's in your hands*

Physical Activity for Type 2 Diabetes

Physical activity is good for everyone and especially important for people with type 2 Diabetes.

What does physical activity do?

- Improves the body's response to insulin, which can lower blood glucose levels. Helps insulin work better
- Lowers blood pressure and improves cholesterol, which reduces the risk of heart disease
- Assists in weight loss and helps prevent weight gain
- Being active can also have other benefits that include general feelings of wellbeing (reduces stress and feelings of sadness), increased energy levels, improved sleep and strengthens bones.

What type of activity is good?

Basically any type of activity that gets you moving more and that you enjoy doing.

Things like:

- Walking – this is easy, cheap and doesn't take any special skills
- Dancing – any type of dancing is great
- Riding a bike
- Swimming
- Gardening and housework such as vacuuming
- Joining an exercise program at your local centre – there are many programs available such as strength training or water aerobics.



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How much is enough?

It is recommended that you spend at least 30 minutes a day doing some form of "moderate intensity" physical activity. "Moderate intensity" activity means you will notice your breathing and heart rate speeding up and perhaps a light sweat. You don't have to do 30 minutes all at once, you can do three 10 minute sessions.

REMEMBER: Before starting any physical activity program make sure that you check with your doctor. The doctor will consider your blood sugar levels, any diabetes related complications and the condition of your heart and blood vessels.

Physical Activity Program Plan

Making sure your activity is safe:

Start slowly

- increase your activity level gradually over weeks, not days
- do some stretching exercises after your activity to help avoid muscle soreness and injury.

Be comfortable

- wear loose clothes and supportive shoes. This will make your activity safer and more enjoyable.

Drink enough water

- remember to drink lots of water before, during and after your activity (do not wait until you are thirsty).

Set the right pace

- while you are doing your activity you should be able to talk without losing your breath - if you feel any pain then you **MUST** slow down or stop.

Increase gradually

- gradually increase the amount of activity you do each day. Too much, too quickly will increase your risk of injury.

Make a plan

When you are starting a physical activity program it is important to start out slowly and increase your activity over time. Be realistic – don't make it too hard for yourself and remember every 10 minutes counts!



1. Find activities that you enjoy and want to do

My activities will be: _____

2. Set a date to start – there is no time like now!

My start date will be: _____

3. Choose a time – get into a routine and make a set time to be active every day

My activity time will be: _____

4. Set some goals – how about something like this:

“I will walk every day for 10 minutes after meals”

“I will walk the dog every day this week”

“I will join a walking group or exercise class”

“I will walk the children/grandchildren to the park”

My main goals will be: _____
