

# Include All Types of Activity and Exercise

When you have Diabetes you want to make sure to get all forms of Activity or Exercise in your daily life.

Just taking steps to get more steps like walking to the mailbox or parking further from the store is an easy way to get more active.

One way to see if you are increasing your activity is to use a step tracker. This will show you just how active you are and give you notice when you are reaching your goals....

To maximize the benefits of exercise, it is important that exercise be an ongoing part of your lifestyle, not something you do every now and then.

The good news is there are many types of exercises to choose from.

Aerobic exercise means 'with oxygen'.

It is any form of activity in which the large muscles in your body perform work for several minutes and longer.

To keep doing the aerobic activity, your heart has to pump enough blood to your muscles so they get the oxygen they need.

This helps to improve your body's overall circulation, increases your endurance, and burns calories which can help you lose weight. It is one of the key forms of exercise when trying to manage your diabetes.

Go for a walk, ride a bike, dance, swim, or hike. Find an aerobic activity you enjoy to get you moving.

Brisk walking is a good choice because you can do it anytime, almost anywhere.

Use an activity tracker to count your steps and gradually work up to 10,000 steps each day.

Whatever aerobic activity you choose, aim to do it at least 5 times a week for a minimum of 30 minutes each time at a moderate intensity.

Remember, some activity is better than none. Start slowly and gradually add exercise as your body gets used to it.

Eventually, you can also increase the intensity of your aerobic exercise to increase the benefits.

Resistance exercise is any activity that works your muscles against an opposing force. It increases muscle mass and strength and helps manage your diabetes by allowing your body to make better use of blood glucose.

While increasing your muscle mass you are also helping to decrease your overall body fat.

And, over time, resistance exercises can also improve the health of your blood vessels. This can reduce your risk of heart attack and stroke.

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The most common form of resistance exercise is weightlifting. Make sure you check with your diabetes care team before adding this type of activity to your routine.

If weight machines are not available, small hand-held weights, stretch bands, yoga and calisthenics are alternatives.

Gradually work up to resistance exercises that target all your muscle groups 3 times a week.

You can even use your own body for resistance. Try push-ups, or Pilates to increase your overall strength.

Flexibility exercises, like stretching, can also benefit your overall health. Flexibility exercises help lengthen your muscles, increase blood flow and prevent injury. Try yoga, tai chi, and martial arts.

Flexibility exercises can also provide you with a better mind/body balance. Take time to relax and stretch to feel better about yourself and reduce stress.

A well-balanced exercise routine should include all 3 forms of activity in some manner – aerobic, resistance and flexibility to enjoy all the benefits of exercise. But the exercises you choose to include in your routine are up to you.

*“I like to bike-- I like to mountain bike; I have a road bike. I also like to exercise, work out with weights.”*

Whatever exercises you choose, get active knowing you are doing something good for your diabetes and your overall health.