

Creating an Exercise Routine When You Have Diabetes

Creating an exercise routine can help you stay on track, exercise safely, and help you include all forms of exercise into your activities to ensure you reach your goals.

With a routine that fits your lifestyle you can enjoy how activity benefits your diabetes without feeling overwhelmed.

Because diabetes is a risk factor for heart disease, if you haven't been very active in a long time, meet with your healthcare provider before starting your physical activity plan.

Depending on your age and overall health, your health care provider may recommend an exercise stress test before starting a new exercise plan.

Any special needs you may have should be taken into consideration when creating your exercise routine.

For example, if you have eye disease, such as advanced stage retinopathy, weight training may have to be limited to light resistance or not at all.

If you have neuropathy in your feet that makes it difficult to walk, upper body exercise may be a good option for you.

Once your doctor gives you the okay, meet with your diabetes care team to talk about your physical activity plans.

It is important to choose an activity you enjoy because the more you enjoy it, the easier it will be to make it a routine.

Listening to music or books on tape or watching your favorite show on your TV or tablet while exercising can help.

Here are some other tips to help keep you on track. Make physical activity a priority. Schedule it into your day and guard that time – don't let anything get in your way.

Work with your care team to set goals that are realistic and achievable. At first, your goal may be to walk just ten minutes a day.

When you can do that, make your goal 15 minutes a day. Steadily increase the amount of activity you do.

“Right now I'm pretty much about 7,000, 7,500 steps a day, and I'm trying to increase it again, and so what I'm usually trying to do is maybe just adding between 100 and 500 steps a day. That would be great.”

Aim for 30- 60 minutes of aerobic activity on most days of the week. For weight loss you may need more.

You may want to ask a friend or family member to join you.

Each of you can encourage the other.

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"I have friends that exercise with me now, and they exercise because they know I'm going to be there."

And as you stick to your routine, reward yourself.

Keep track of how well you're doing by keeping a log. Write down when you were active, what you did, for how long, how you felt afterward, and track your blood glucose results before and after physical activity. This log will help you see your progress and will be important when you meet with your diabetes care team.

If you skip your session for any reason, don't think of it as a failure. Everyone needs a break every now and then.

Just get back to working out as soon as you can.

Remember how good exercise is for you, both mentally and physically.

And finally, find ways to add physical activity into your daily routine.

When shopping park further away from the store and walk.

Take the stairs instead of the elevator.

Use a push mower instead of a riding lawn mower.

Soon you won't even notice you've added more healthy activity to your routine, you'll just enjoy the health benefits.