

Diabetes: How Exercise Can Help

You probably have a good idea about what you need to do to manage your diabetes.

It can feel like a lot to do.

But there's one thing that helps in so many ways: getting regular exercise.

Here's how getting regular exercise can help control your blood sugar.

Maybe you've heard already that when you have diabetes, sugar builds up in your blood.

But when you exercise, your body uses the sugar.

So just like some of your diabetes medicines, activity helps keep sugar from building up in your blood.

Sometimes people who exercise regularly can take less medicine.

You might want to talk to your doctor about that.

Exercise may help you in other ways too.

It can improve your blood pressure and cholesterol, which can reduce the risk of heart disease.

Like a lot of people, you may discover that being more active helps you feel stronger, happier, and more confident.

You may be more relaxed and may find that you're sleeping better.

It's your decision, but if you're thinking about adding more activity as a way to care for yourself, it's a good idea to talk to your doctor about how much and when to do it.

Your doctor can tell you what types of exercises are good choices for you.

But for most people, walking, bike riding, swimming, and strength training are great.

Even if it's tempting, don't try to do too much at first.

Add more activity bit by bit.

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Checking your blood sugar before and after exercise can help you see how your body reacts to different types of activities.

You and your doctor can decide how often you need to check your blood sugar.

You can use this information to help prevent high or low blood sugar emergencies.

Now that you've seen how exercise helps control your blood sugar and how it helps in other ways, here's a bonus tip: When you're ready to be more active to help manage your diabetes, try to find something you enjoy.

You'll be more likely to stay with it.