



## Diabetes and Exercise



### Overview

Your diabetes management plan is not complete without a focus on physical activity. Regular exercise helps you control your weight. And, it helps keep your blood glucose levels on target. Daily exercise also lowers your risk for heart disease and other serious complications of diabetes.

### Consult Your Doctor

Consult your doctor before beginning an exercise plan. Find out what types of activities will be best for your health. Your doctor can also give you tips for exercising safely, such as wearing a medical alert bracelet or necklace and carrying your identification and important phone numbers with you.

### Monitor Your Blood Glucose

Physical activity changes your blood glucose level, so measure your blood glucose before, during and after exercise. You may need to raise your blood glucose to a safe level before exercise. You may need to postpone activity if your level is too high. And when you exercise, carry blood glucose tablets or fast-acting sources of carbs so you can manage your blood glucose level if necessary.

### Start Slowly

If you are out of shape, start slowly with a low-impact exercise such as walking or swimming. Exercise a few minutes each day, and gradually increase your speed and duration. Try to exercise for 30-45 minutes on most days. Your goal should be 150 minutes per week of moderately intense activity. This is activity that feels somewhat hard, but not so challenging that it leaves you out of breath. Moderately intense activities include walking the dog at a brisk pace, mowing the lawn, golfing without a cart or doing yoga.

### Take Care of Your Feet

Make sure you take care of your feet, especially if you have poor circulation. If you're doing something that impacts your feet, wear good socks and shoes that fit well. Check your feet carefully before and after exercise. Look for blisters or sores, and treat them immediately so they don't turn into serious problems. With proper planning and careful monitoring, your diabetes won't stop you from enjoying the health benefits of regular exercise.