

Exercise

Taking Charge of Your Diabetes

Your Health • Your Future

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Being Fit Is Important for You

Exercise is important for good health and to help control diabetes.

Exercise helps in lots of ways:

- It keeps the blood flowing in your body.
- It lowers your blood sugar.
- It keeps your heart and lungs healthy.
- It helps your muscle tone.
- It helps you lose weight.
- It helps to lower cholesterol.
- It makes you feel better.

Remember:

- Talk to your doctor about an exercise program that is right for you.
- If you have not exercised in along time, talk to your doctor before you start again.
- Do exercises that you like.
- You will feel much better if you exercise a few times each week, not just once in a while.
- It will take some time to get used to exercising. So do not look for changes right away. Be patient.

Preparing to Exercise

You should feel comfortable when you exercise. Here are some things to do to help you:

- Exercise in a room that is not too hot or too cool.
- Play music with a slow and steady beat.
- Put a towel or mat under you when you exercise on the floor.
- Wear loose layers of clothes. As you begin to warm up, take off a layer of clothes.
- Do not wear any loose jewelry.
- Wear shoes or sneakers that fit, and cotton or wool socks.
- Exercise at the same time each day. This will help you get into a routine.
- Do not exercise right after you eat because it can lower your blood sugar too much.

Warming Up and Cooling Down

You should always warm up before you exercise and cool down after you exercise. It will keep you from hurting yourself or getting muscle cramps.

Use these stretches first as warm-ups. Then do them after you exercise to cool down. Do them in order.

1. Neck Rolls

Bring your chin to your chest. Slowly turn your head to the right. Bring your right ear to your right shoulder. Tilt your head back slightly. Roll your left ear to your left shoulder. Then roll your chin back to your chest. Do this 4 times. Now do it in the other direction 4 more times.

2. Shoulder Shrugs

Lift your shoulders to your ears. Hold them there as you count to 5. Then relax. Do this 8 times.

3. Hand Grips

Hold both arms straight out in front of you. Stretch your fingers out and count to 2. Make a tight fist and count to 2. Slowly work up to 15 of these. Shake out our arms and hand when you are done.

4. Calf and Arm Stretches

Stand about 2 feet from the wall. Face the wall and put your hands against it. Make sure your body is straight. Then, bending your arms, bring your nose as close to the wall as you can. Your heels should stay on the floor. Hold your nose close to the wall and count to 10. Then straighten your arms Do this 4 times.

5. Ankle Circles

Sit on a chair on the floor with your legs uncrossed. Circle your foot 5 times and then relax. Do this in the other direction 5 times and then relax. Do the same thing with your other foot. Shake out your feet when you are done.

6. Deep Breathing

Stand or sit straight up. keep your shoulders down and relaxed. Count to 5 and slowly breathe in while raising your arms to form a “V”. Then breathe out to the count of 5 as you lower your arms. Do this 5 times, then shake out your arms.

Exercises from Head to Toe

After you warm up, do these exercises. Start slowly. Do only a few of each. Slowly add more exercises over time. Write down the exercises you do and the number of times you do each one so you can see your progress. Use the Daily Activity Diary on page 13. Be sure to cool down when you are done.

1. Neck Stretches

Squat down with your back straight. Place your hands on your thighs. Turn only your head, not your body, to the right and try to look at the ceiling. Count to 5. Then, turn your head to your left side and do the same thing. Do this exercise 5 times.

2. Arm Stretches

Stand up straight. Place your feet as far apart as the width of your shoulders. To the count of 5, stretch your right arm to the ceiling. Keep your feet flat on the floor. Now do this with your left arm. Do this 10 times. When you are done, shake out your arms.

3. Arm Circles

Stand up straight. Place your feet as far apart as the width of your shoulders. Keep them flat on the floor. Hold your arms straight out to the side at shoulder height, with fingers spread and palms down. Relax your shoulders. Tighten the muscles in your stomach and buttocks. From your shoulders, move your arms in circles 10 times forward and then 10 times backward. When you are done, shake out your arms. Over time, work up to 20 circles each way.

4. Waist Bends

Stand up straight. Place your feet as far apart as the width of your shoulders. Bring your right ear toward your right shoulder as you reach with your right hand to the side of your right knee. As your left side stretches, bring your left hand up to the left side of your waist. Keep this stretched position and count to 10. Be sure to look straight ahead. Do not lean with your hips. Balance your weight on each side as you do this exercise. Slowly go back to the straight-up position. Repeat with your left hand to left knee and right hand to your waist. Stretch and count to 10. Now slowly stand up straight again. Work up to 5 of these.

5. Back Soother

Lie down. Place your back flat on the floor. Bend both of your knees in close to your chest. Hug your knees with your arms. Slowly, to the count of 5, bring your forehead close to your knees. Hold it there for 5 seconds. Slowly, lower your head down to the floor to the count of 5. Work up to 15 of these.

6. Heel Raises

Stand up straight. Place your feet as far apart as the width of your shoulders. Hold in your stomach and buttocks. Hold on to the back of a chair. Keep your knees straight. Raise your heels up off the floor. Count to 5. Lower your heels slowly. Work up to 10 times.

AFTER COMPLETING THESE EXERCISES, COOL DOWN BY REPEATING THE EXERCISES ON PAGE 3 TO 6.

Every Little Bit Helps

You do not have to exercise hard or for a long time to burn calories. The things you do each day, such as cleaning the house or walking, may burn calories as well. If you have to sit in a chair all the time, arm exercises may be good for you. Take advantage of the opportunities you have during the day to exercise.

To get the most benefit from exercising:

- Consult with your doctor about an exercise program.
- Do exercises that you like.
- Do exercises regularly.
- Stick with your exercise program.

Remember:

- If you start to feel bad, that is a sign to stop.
- If you do not feel well while you exercise or when you finish, call your doctor.
- Keep a diary. That way you can see your progress. Use the Daily Activity Diary on the next page.

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