



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY + DIABETES



In the words of Mary Poppins, just a spoon full of sugar helps the medicine go down. However, a few too many spoonfuls and not enough physical activity are not the best medicine. Your body uses the sugar (glucose) in your bloodstream for energy, but having too much glucose in your blood can hurt you.

Diabetes is a condition you experience when your body cannot properly use and store glucose. It occurs when the body does not make enough insulin, or it does not respond well to the insulin it makes. If you have type 2 diabetes, glucose builds up in your blood instead of being used for energy. This type of diabetes, which is the most prevalent kind, is referred to as adult onset diabetes, because it is typically diagnosed in people over the age of 40.

Diabetes can lead to serious complications and premature death, but a healthy, active lifestyle can help people with diabetes manage it. Regular physical activity improves your body's sensitivity to insulin and actually helps manage your blood glucose levels. In fact, physical activity can even help prevent diabetes in those who may be at risk for it!

Whether you have diabetes or not, you will experience health benefits from participating in regular physical activity. If you do have type 2 diabetes, physical activity is on your side. Just make sure that you're prepared to get moving.



CHECK WITH YOUR DOCTOR

- ✓ If you have diabetes complications, some kinds of physical activity can make your problem worse. Before you start any new type of physical activity, check with your doctor or health professional to see if it is right for you.
- ✓ Make sure you wear comfortable, proper-fitting shoes. Older adults with diabetes sometimes have foot problems. Check with your doctor or foot specialist to make sure you have suitable shoes. If it is not safe for you to walk, you could try cycling or swimming instead.



- ✓ Wear your Medic Alert bracelet or necklace.
- ✓ Monitor your blood glucose before, during, and after your physical activity to see how getting active affects your blood glucose levels.
- ✓ Carry food or glucose tablets with you so you will be ready to treat any symptoms of low blood glucose levels.



- ✓ Try these resistance exercises developed by Diabetes Canada:
<http://www.diabetes.ca/diabetes-and-you/healthy-living-resources/exercise/resistance-exercises-plan>
- ✓ Physical activity can help prevent and manage diabetes, as well as improve your overall health and well-being. Some may even say it's a sweet way to stay healthy!



For more information on getting active with diabetes, check out Canadian Diabetes Association or contact:

Diabetes Canada, NL Region
29-31 Pippy Place, Suite 3008
St. John's, NL A1B 3X2
709-754-0953 | nlinfo@diabetes.ca