

What Activity Can Do For You

- * Helps you feel better about yourself
- * Helps you cope with stress
- * Helps your body use insulin better
- * Lowers your blood sugar (glucose), blood cholesterol, and blood pressure
- * Helps improve your circulation
- * Helps you maintain a healthy weight
- * Gives you more energy to get through the day!



How long should I exercise?

Start with 5 minutes and work up to 20 - 30 minutes. Even a 5 or 10 minute session helps. Exercise for 2 to 5 minutes longer each week until you get to your goal. Then keep doing it! Be sure to warm up and cool down your muscles with each exercise session to keep your muscles from getting sore.



When should I exercise?

Morning time is best, approximately 1 - 2 hours after breakfast. This is when your body is the most sensitive to insulin. If this time is not possible, any time is good except during the peak times of your insulin action or just before a meal.

How often should I exercise?

Daily, if possible, but at least 3 times a week to gain some benefit.

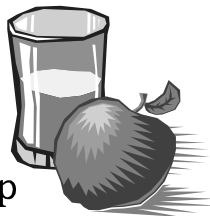
Precautions

Monitoring before exercise

Blood sugars can drop 30 - 50, even 100, points with exercise, depending on how long and how intense the exercise is.

Guidelines for blood sugars before exercise:

- < 100 no exercise, need a snack first
- 100 - 300 safe to exercise
- > 300 no exercise, may cause blood sugar to go up



Risk of Hypoglycemia

Hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) may occur. Know the symptoms of low blood sugar and always carry fast-acting carbohydrates. Glucose tablets are the best. Blood sugars may continue to decrease for several hours after exercise.



Compiled by: Andi Ridgway, MS, RD, LD, CDE
Diabetes Control Program
Arkansas Department of Health