

# Physical Activity to Manage Your Diabetes

## Part 1



Physical activity, or exercise, is an important part of managing your diabetes. Regular physical activity helps **lower your blood glucose, help you lose weight, and lower your risk for heart disease**. There are 2 kinds of physical activity, or exercise, that will help you manage your blood glucose: **cardiovascular (aerobic) exercise** and **strengthening exercise**.

## What is cardiovascular (aerobic) exercise?

Cardiovascular exercise raises your heart rate. You should get **at least 150 minutes** of moderate cardiovascular exercise each week. You can split the 150 minutes up however you want. For example, you can do 30 minutes, 5 days a week or around 20 minutes, 7 days a week. You can even break it up into 10 minute segments at a time.

### Moderate Exercises:



Taking a Brisk Walk



Riding a bike



Dancing



Gardening



House work

How to tell if you are getting  
**moderate exercise:**

- You **breathe faster**, but you are **not out of breath**
- You can talk, but **cannot sing**
- You **sweat a little bit** after about 10 minutes

# What are Strengthening Exercises?



Strengthening exercise makes your muscles stronger and leaner. This can help your body better use glucose, so your blood glucose stays at a healthy level. You should try to do strength exercises at least 2 times a week. When you are doing strengthening exercises:

- Make sure you are exercising all of your muscles (upper and lower body)
- Start off using less weight to prevent injury
- Do each exercise at least 10 times in a row, then rest for 30-60 seconds. This is called a “set.” You should try to do at least 2 more sets with a rest in between if you can.

## Strengthening exercises include:

- Lifting weights (such as hand weights or with a weight machine)
- Using **resistance bands**
- Any exercise that uses your body weight as resistance (such as **push-ups, pull-ups, crunches, sit-ups, squats, or leg lifts**)

## How do I exercise safely with diabetes?

Here are a few things you should do to make sure you exercise safely:

### • Drink plenty of water



When you have diabetes, you become dehydrated more easily. Dehydration is when you lose body fluids. So, drink water throughout the day and when you exercise.

### • Wear a medical ID tag



In an emergency, an ID tag can let people know you have diabetes. Medical workers will be able to take better care of you. These can be found at most drugstores or online.

### • Watch your blood glucose



Before you start to exercise, check your blood glucose. If it is low or you feel shaky or weak, eat a snack before you exercise.

### • Exercise with a friend or family member



Exercising with someone can make exercise more fun, and you are more likely to stick with your exercise plan.