

Physical Activity

Part 2

Physical activity, or exercise, is a great way to manage blood glucose. But if it is new to you, or it has been a while since you have exercised, it may seem like a hard task to take on.

Some things may make it hard to exercise, such as:

- Cost
- Lack of time
- Fitness level or not able to move well
- Fear of getting hurt
- Lack of motivation or support
- Not knowing where to start

Think about which barriers are true for you. Do not let them stop you! There are lots of ways to overcome them and get some exercise.

How do I overcome the barriers that make it hard for me to exercise?

Schedule it

Treat exercise like any other appointment and keep it. Write it down or put a reminder in your phone.

Start off slow

Don't overdo it. Keep exercise times short or use lighter weights and then slowly increase. Choose exercises that are low-impact.

Do free things

Look for free apps for your smartphone or free workouts on YouTube. Walk around your neighborhood or hike a trail.

Make it fun

Find an activity that you like. Pair up with an exercise buddy, like a friend or family member.

Find your "why"

Are you trying to improve your A1C? Have more energy for your kids? Find your own important, personal reasons.



Set a S.M.A.R.T. goal:

You are more likely to start and continue if you set some goals. Your goals should be **S.M.A.R.T. goals**, such as "I will walk for 20 minutes, 5 days a week". **S.M.A.R.T. goals are:**

Specific:

States exactly what you **plan to do**.

Measurable:

Choose an activity goal that lets you measure your progress, such as **weight or exercise time**.

Attainable:

Set a goal that you can achieve, but is **still a little challenging**.

Relevant:

Set a goal that lines up with your **long-term goals**.

Time-based:

Set a **deadline** for you to meet your goal.

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What kind of exercises can I do?

You can exercise for free in the safety of your own home, and find all kinds of free fitness videos online (such as YouTube), if you're not sure what activities to do. Below are some other ideas.

Examples of exercises:

- Riding a bike
- Swimming
- Water aerobics
- Dancing
- Mowing your lawn
- Vacuuming your house
- Yoga
- Hiking
- Using resistance bands, light hand weights or household objects like canned goods
- Using your body weight as resistance to do exercises
- Jumping rope
- Jumping jacks
- Doing seated exercises
- Squats and push-ups
- Jogging
- Kickboxing
- Walking up and down stairs
- Walking at a local park or around your neighborhood

What do I need to do before I start exercising?

- Discuss your exercise plan with your doctor to make sure it is safe for you.
- Choose a simple, enjoyable activity with a SMART goal to help get you started.
- Always check your blood glucose before exercising. Exercise can lower your blood glucose, so you want to make sure that it is not already too low.
- If your blood glucose is low, eat a small snack before you exercise. It should be about 15 grams of carbs plus some protein. For example, a small apple and a tablespoon of peanut butter.
- Don't over-do it. It's better to start slow, such as exercising for a shorter time or using lighter weights, then slowly increase. This is safer than getting injured.
- Having a support system can help you stay accountable and make physical activity more enjoyable.
- Start small and build on your goals over time.