

# Benefits of Physical Activity

Want to feel better, have more energy, be in a better mood and perhaps live longer? Well look no further than to old-fashioned exercise! Regular physical activity is important for good health, and it is especially important if you are trying to lose or maintain a healthy weight.

- Physical activity increases the number of calories your body uses for energy, or “burns off,” which will result in weight loss
- Most weight loss occurs due to decreased caloric intake. However, research shows that the only way to maintain weight loss is to be engaged in regular physical activity.
- Most importantly, physical activity reduces the risk of chronic diseases, such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease

- **Top 10 Benefits of Physical Activity – Especially for Diabetics:**

1. **Improve blood glucose management**

- Activity makes your body more sensitive to insulin and burns glucose (calories), both actions will lower your blood sugar levels

2. **Lower blood pressure (Hypertension)**

- Regular activity will make your heart pump stronger and slower

3. **Improve blood fats (Hyperlipidemia)**

- Exercise will boost HDL (“good”) cholesterol, while decreasing LDL (“bad”) cholesterol. This will help blood flow smoothly by lowering the buildup of plaques in your arteries.

4. **Take less insulin or diabetes pills**

- Activity can lower you blood glucose, minimizing the amount of medications you need to take

5. **Lose and maintain weight**

- Activity burns calories
- Regular activity will help you burn enough calories to lose weight, and by staying active you will maintain your weight loss.

6. **Lower risk for other health complications**

- Reduce your risk of a heart attack, stroke, several forms of cancer and bone loss

7. **Promotes better sleep and increases energy level**

- A good night sleep can improve your mood, concentration and productivity

8. **Relieve stress**

- Walk off stress!
- Exercise simulates various brain chemicals, which may leave you feeling more relaxed and happier

9. **Build strong bones and muscles**

- Reduces your risk of osteoporosis
- Weight-bearing activity, such as walking, makes bones stronger.
- Strength-training activities, such as lifting weights (or even a can of beans), make muscles strong

10. **Flexibility**

- you are able to move and get around easier when you are active

## Types of Exercise:

There are three types of exercise: aerobic exercise, strength training and flexibility. To have a well rounded exercise routine, make it your goal to incorporate all three types of exercise into your daily physical activity.

### 1. Aerobic Exercise:

- a. Walking (outside, on a track or a treadmill)
- b. Go dancing
- c. Take a low-impact aerobic class
- d. Swim or aerobic water exercises
- e. Roller skating or ice skating
- f. Play tennis
- g. Bike (indoors or outdoors)
- h. Jump rope



### 2. Strength Training

- a. Lift weights (at home or in a gym)
- b. Join a strength training class (weights, bands, or plastic tubes)

### 3. Flexibility (stretching)

- a. Gentle stretching for 5 – 10 minutes every day
  - i. This will help your body warm up and get ready for activity

### 4. Be active throughout the day!

- a. Walk or bike instead of drive
- b. Take the stairs instead of the elevator
- c. Work in the garden
- d. Rake leaves
- e. Do some housecleaning every day
- f. Make your bed every morning
- g. Park at the far end of the shopping center and walk to the store

## How Much Exercise?

Remember these are guidelines, you don't need to go from 0 – 60 in a day or even a week. Take your exercise plan one step at a time and gradually build up to your goal of 30 – 60 minutes every day.

- If you have pre-diabetes, diabetes, or the general adult public should aim for a minimum of 30 minutes most days of the week.
  - Make it your goal to exercise 3 –5 days every week, for 30 – 60 minutes each time
- Children, teens and young adults should aim for at least 60 minutes of exercise most days

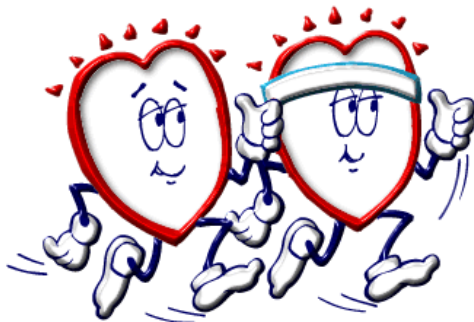
Like most people with diabetes or heart disease, you are probably feeling overwhelmed. Your doctor, nurses and dieticians are telling you to: Choose healthy foods, make healthy meals, be active 30 minutes every day and so on, but where should you start? It's not easy to do all of this every day living in today's fast-paced and fast-food world and it can be even harder if you have a lot of changes you want to make. Just remember that this is a **lifestyle** change. Take your diet and exercise plan one step at a time, and after a few weeks, you will have a daily routine that you will be comfortable with which will ultimately help you reach your goal!

# Weekly Activity Log

Week of: \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Date	Activity	How You Felt During and After Activity	Time Exercised	TOTAL

Weekly Total: \_\_\_\_\_



Walk – Jump Rope – Run – Skip – Swim – Dance – Jog – Bike – Hop – *Smile!*