

Keeping Active with Diabetes

Keeping active is important for people who have or are at risk of diabetes

Keeping active is an important part of one's lifestyle, and particularly for those who either have or are atrisk of diabetes.

Even a little extra activity can have a lot of benefits, such as improving insulin sensitivity, improving your feeling of well being, controlling your weight, reducing risks of cancer and heart problems and helping strengthen bones as well as muscles.

How much activity should I be doing?

Any extra activity you can fit into your day is a plus. The minimum recommended level of activity is 30 minutes at least 5 days a week.

Children should aim for at least an hour a day. The British Heart Foundation recommends that we take 10,000 steps per day to promote a healthy heart; this is equivalent to about 5 miles.

What counts as activity?

Activity counts as anything that will up your heart rate a little.

This could include any of the following:

- a brisk walk
- climbing flights of stairs
- shopping (not internet shopping though!)
- gardening
- housework
- DIY
- dancing
- yoga, pilates, tai chi
- active sports

Motivation towards being more active

Some people find it difficult to commit to being more active citing not having enough time as one of the reasons. Whilst activity does involve some investment of time, in the longer run, a little activity or exercise can help to free up time as well as providing you with more vitality.

Activity allows the brain to function better and can help to compulsive behaviours which can lead to your time being better spent. The term healthy body, healthy mind rings true.

Activity and heart problems

People with existing heart problems may need to avoid particularly strenuous activities such as press ups, lifting weights and strenuous aerobic exercise such as running.

Any activity that involves getting up quickly may also need to be avoided. If you have cardiovascular problems, your healthcare team can offer advice as to which activities will be most suitable.

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