

# Benefits of Activity

*Do you find it difficult to exercise? Do you feel that you just don't have enough time in the day to go to the gym? Do you feel too tired at the end of the day? If you answered "yes" to these questions, read ahead.*

Exercise has so many health benefits but it can be hard getting started. Gyms and expensive exercise equipment are not necessary at all! The good news is that you can reap the benefits of physical activity by just moving throughout the day.

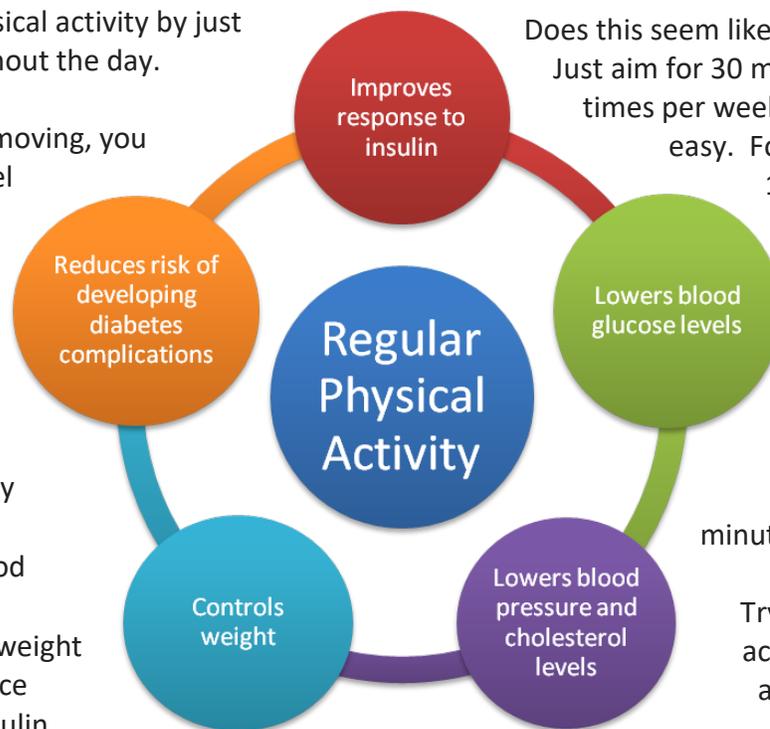
Once you get moving, you will start to feel better and improve your health. Health benefits associated with regular physical activity include:

- Lowered blood sugars
- Weight loss/weight maintenance
- Improved insulin effect
- Lowered risk of heart disease and improved circulation
- Improved cholesterol levels
- Lowered blood pressure
- Better self-esteem and reduced stress
- Increases energy levels

The American Diabetes Association recommends 150 minutes of moderate activity each week to maintain good health.

Does this seem like too much? Just aim for 30 minutes, five times per week. Start out easy. For example: 10 minutes, 3 times per day. Then work your way up to 30-60 continuous minutes per day.

Try to include activities that are good for your heart (aerobic) and good for your muscles (strength training). Activities that are good for your heart include walking, cycling, swimming, water aerobics, skating, dancing, and playing tennis. Activities that are good for your muscles include lifting light hand weights, resistance bands, yoga, and calisthenics.



# Let's get started!

Activity should be done at a moderate intensity. Not sure what that would be?

Just use the **Talk Test** method to measure how hard you are working. If you can do the activity and sing at the same time, the intensity is light. If you can carry on a conversation but are a little breathless, the intensity is moderate, so try to maintain that. If you can barely speak and are short of breath, the intensity is hard and you may want to reduce your intensity.

So now that you know the benefits and recommendations for exercise, what do you need to get started?

- Think of some of your most enjoyable activities; Create a program that includes these activities because you have a better chance of succeeding
- Set realistic, short-term goals; What would you like to achieve, how are you going to achieve it, and how long will it take you? Evaluate your progress every week and set new goals
- Get motivated! Make a list of all the benefits that exercise will bring to you and your health
- Find support; Exercise with a buddy or get a group together and help each other reach your goals
- Get a comfortable pair of exercise shoes; Ensure that you choose appropriate shoes for the type of exercise; Wear comfortable clothing and cotton socks, as they are better at absorbing sweat



## With diabetes, remember:

- If you are planning to start, increase or change the type of training you do, discuss this with your healthcare team first
- Activity can affect your blood sugar up to 24 hours afterwards
- If you take medications that lower your blood sugar remember to:
  - Check your blood sugar before and after the physical activity
  - Carry a source of fast-acting glucose with you in case of low blood sugars
- Stay well hydrated
- Do not exercise if you have ketones present
- Always check your feet after physical activity