

Exercise and Weight

Physical activity is a powerful tool for managing diabetes. It changes how your body uses energy, stabilizes blood sugar, and supports a healthy weight.

How Exercise Affects Blood Sugar

Movement lowers glucose levels without requiring extra medication.

- **The Insulin Surge:** When you exercise, your muscles absorb glucose from your blood for fuel—even if your body is resistant to insulin.
- **The Afterburn:** Activity increases insulin sensitivity for up to 24-48 hours, meaning your insulin or medications work much better after you move.
- **Adrenaline Spikes:** Intense workouts can sometimes cause a temporary blood sugar *spike* due to adrenaline, but it usually settles down afterward.

Managing Weight with Diabetes

Weight management is about reducing insulin resistance and protecting your metabolism.

- **Muscle Connection:** Building muscle through strength training burns more calories at rest and creates more storage space for glucose, making weight management easier.
- **Insulin Balance:** High levels of circulating insulin can make it easier for the body to store fat. Balancing your numbers through nutrition and exercise reduces the need for high doses of medication, supporting natural weight loss.
- **Fat Loss v. Scale:** Focus on how your clothes fit and how your energy feels. Building muscle while losing body fat is the ultimate goal.

Safe Movement

- **Check Before You Move:** If your blood sugar is <100 mg/dL, eat a small, 15-gram carb snack before starting to prevent a crash.
- **Essentials:** Always keep fast-acting sugar (juice, glucose tabs) and water with you during a workout.
- **Start Small:** You don't need hours in the gym. A simple 10-to-15 minute walk after meals is incredibly effective at flattening blood sugar spikes.