



5.0. How much exercise should I do?

A good exercise routine should include 10 minutes of stretching or light weightlifting, followed by 20 minutes of walking. If you have not exercised in a while, you may need to build up to that. Once you become comfortable with this amount of exercise, you should gradually increase the duration. Remember to start slowly, and build up your strength and endurance gradually so you can stick with your new exercise routine.

The Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate can assist you with physical activity classes available both online and face-to-face in various localities.

Visit https://hpd.gov.mt/hpu/physical_activity for suggested walking routes and exercise videos for you to try and enjoy!

Joining walking groups or a walking buddy might help with motivation.

For more information, please contact:

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EXERCISE AND DIABETES

**An information leaflet prepared
by the Health Promotion and Disease
Prevention Directorate**



GOVERNMENT OF MALTA
MINISTRY FOR HEALTH
AND ACTIVE AGEING



Health Promotion & Disease
Prevention Directorate



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Exercise and diabetes

Being physically active is beneficial for all of us, but it is especially important for managing diabetes. Whether you feel able to go for a run or a swim, or simply walk on the spot while the kettle boils, it all makes a difference. Remember, small victories count!

1.0. What are the benefits of exercising for diabetes?

Staying active benefits not just your body but also supports your mental well-being and helps reduce stress. Moving more can help the body use insulin better, it helps in the maintenance of a healthy weight, blood pressure and cholesterol measurements, improves joint and muscle movement while also strengthening bones. Exercise has also been shown to help with the release of endorphins (the happy hormones), with stress reduction, improved mood, and better sleep.

2.0. Exercising safely with diabetes – where do you start?

Consult with your healthcare team before starting any new exercise programme.

Start slowly and progress gradually.

Monitor blood glucose levels to help you understand how different activities affect your glucose levels.

Stay hydrated and eat balanced meals.

Listen to your body. If you feel dizzy, shaky, or unusually fatigued, take a break, and check your blood sugar. Always carry a carbohydrate-rich snack in case you need it.

Wear appropriate footwear and clothing.

Set realistic and achievable goals.



3.0. What is the best type of exercise when you have diabetes?

There is not one type of activity that is best for everyone with diabetes – it is about finding what works for you. There are 3 basic types of exercise, and you should try to get a mix of all 3 over the course of a week. These include **weight-bearing**, which is also called resistance training; **aerobic**, which is also called endurance training and **flexibility**. Lifting weights is an example of a weight-bearing exercise, which helps in building muscle and strength. Aerobic exercises like walking, biking, and swimming, gets the heart pumping, improving circulation and lung function. Flexibility training can help prevent injury and includes exercises like stretching, yoga, and Pilates.

4.0. Tips to increase physical activity



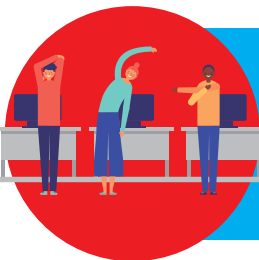
Keeping active at home

While at home, stay active by walking on-the-spot during TV commercials, doing some arm and leg stretches, vacuuming, gardening, washing the car, or even using food cans as makeshift weights.



Keeping active on the move

Try getting off the bus one stop earlier, or parking further away from your destination, taking the stairs instead of the lift or escalator and walking.



Keeping active at work

You may want to try walking meetings, using stand-up desks, doing chair exercises, stretching and movement breaks. This can also be a great way to relieve stress!