

# Living Well with Diabetes

## Getting active: how to get started

Make a physical activity plan that's realistic for you right now. Start from where you are and increase slowly. That way, you're more likely to succeed in reaching your goal. Remember: getting a small amount of activity each day is better than doing nothing at all.

### Some ideas to get you started:

#### **Look for ways to be more active in your day-to-day activities**

- If you're going a short distance, walk instead of drive.
- When you do drive, park a little distance away and walk to your final destination.
- Look for ways to move around your house or yard. Vacuum, mop, mow, rake, or pull weeds.
- Walk your dog. If you don't have a dog, borrow one from a neighbor.
- Use exercise bands for an upper body work out while you watch TV.
- Sit on an exercise ball when you're at the computer.

#### **Think of fun activities that will get you moving**

- Take a leisurely bike ride after dinner.
- Go for a swim.
- Dance while you listen to music.
- Learn something new, like yoga or tai chi, ballroom dancing, or even juggling.
- Enjoy activities with your friends and family, such as playing Frisbee, bowling, or miniature golf.

#### **Make an action plan**

After adding physical activity to your life, you can start looking for ways to increase the amount you're getting each day. Many people find it helpful to make an action plan to get to their goal.

Remember these steps to make an action plan that works for you:

- Pick an activity that YOU want to do. Not something you think you should do because someone else wants you to do it.
- Pick something you can do pretty easily. Ask yourself, "how likely am I to succeed at this?" If your answer is "not very..." make another plan.
- Make your plan specific. That way you can measure your success. Use these questions as your guide: What am I going to do? How much am I going to do? When am I going to do it (what time and which days)

### Examples of specific goals:

What am I going to do?	Go bowling with my friends, Debbie and Joe
How much am I going to do?	2 days this week for 1 hour each time
When am I going to do it?	Wed. 6 to 7 p.m. and Sun. 2 to 3 p.m.

What?	Do chair exercises while I watch TV
How much?	3 days this week for 15 minutes each day
When?	Mon. and Wed. before dinner from 5:30 to 5:45 Sat. morning from 10 to 10:15

**My action plan for (start date): \_\_\_\_\_ to (end date): \_\_\_\_\_**

What am I going to do?	
How much am I going to do?	
When am I going to do it?	

My plan	I did it!	What worked, what didn't
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

**When you reach your goal, give yourself a small reward, and set a new goal!**

## Problem-solve to get past obstacles

If you haven't been very active in the past, the first couple of weeks might seem hard. The good news is that once you start moving, it's easier to stay moving!

Some things to think about when you just don't feel like being active:

- Try not to think of it as exercise. Think of it as just a chance to get moving. Look for ways to move more in your day-to-day activities.
- Have a back-up plan. For example, if your favorite activity takes place outside and the weather is bad, or it's getting dark earlier, think of other things you might like to do, such as mall walking, bowling, exercising to a video, or using an indoor exercise machine.
- Find fun ways to turn social activities into physical activities you can do with your friends and family. Instead of meeting a friend for lunch, meet for a walk. Instead of going to the movies, make a date to play miniature golf.

Many people find it useful to plan for what can help them or what might get in their way. Planning can help you decide how to handle things, or where to go for help, before a problem comes up.

### What might make it hard for me?

### What can help me reach my goal?

<b>Example:</b> I don't like walking when it's rainy outside.	<b>Example:</b> I'll find an indoor activity I enjoy, like bowling.

## Tips to help you stay on track

Everyone gets off track once in a while. This can happen for many reasons - a change in your daily schedule, illness or injury, or simply not feeling up to it. But don't give up completely just because you missed a few days.

- Remind yourself that it's OK to have a break once in a while.
- Make a new action plan and plan a reward for yourself when you reach your goal.
- Keep a record of your physical activity. Tracking activity can be very motivating and will help to remind you of how far you've come.
- If you're bored with your activity, find a new one! How about dance lessons?
- Invite someone to join you. Having a partner to do things with is a great motivator