Tips for Kids with Type 2 Diabetes

# Be Active

## Why is being active so important?

Exercise is good for everyone, whether you have type 2 diabetes or not. Being active keeps your body healthy and strong. It can help you stay at a weight that's right for you or help you lose weight slowly.

Physical activity can make you feel better if you're in a bad mood, relax you, and help you sleep well. If you have diabetes, exercise can help your body use glucose (GLOO-kos) for energy and lower your blood sugar (glucose).

## What types of activity are good to do?

There are many ways you can stay active.

- Walk the dog, take a hike, or ride a bike.
- Roller skate, in-line skate, or ice skate.
- Dance, swim, or jog.
- Check out an aerobics tape from the library and work out at home.
- You can play basketball, baseball, softball, golf, soccer, tennis, or volleyball.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator, skip rope, fly a kite, throw a disc, or play hopscotch.

Think of other things you can do and just move it! **Don't forget to have fun!**

Make exercise a part of your daily life. Be active with a friend or family member—it is easier and more fun when you have a buddy.

## What should you do before exercising?

Talk to your doctor about what physical activity is good for you.

- Ask if you need to check your blood glucose before starting any activity or after you are done.
- Ask if the medicine you take can make your blood glucose get too low during exercise. If so, keep a snack with you when you exercise.

## How much exercise do you need to do?

If you haven't been very active, start slowly. Try a few minutes each day. Slowly work up to 60 minutes almost every day. Pick an activity you like to do.

## How can your family and friends help?

Ask your family members and friends to be active with you—it's good for everyone and helps to get rid of stress. **It's a great way for families to spend time together, too.** Ask your family to take a walk after dinner, instead of watching TV. Instead of playing computer games, put on some music that everyone can dance to. Help your mom or dad carry groceries, clean the house, cut the grass, do garden work, rake leaves, or shovel snow.

## What if you don't like to exercise?

There are a lot of things you can do to be more active. Try these: do sit-ups, lift light weights, or jump rope while you watch TV. Take the stairs when you can, run around during recess at school, or walk fast around the mall a few times when you go shopping. **You don't have to play a sport or go to a gym.**

Don't get upset if you can't do a lot or if you get out of breath at first—keep trying. Any amount of activity will help and you can add a little more each week. Make a list of some things you like to do. Hang it in your room as a reminder.

## Take Charge of Your Diabetes

Remember, if you have type 2 diabetes, you need to choose healthy foods, be active every day, take your medicine, check your blood glucose as often as your doctor suggests, and stay at a healthy weight. Taking care of your diabetes will help you stay healthy, feel better, and keep your blood glucose where you want it to be.

Special thanks to the kids who helped us make this tip sheet.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP) is jointly sponsored by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) with the support of more than 200 partner organizations.

Revised August 2010 NIH Publication No. 07-5295 NDEPI-1

## What are some things parents can do to help promote physical activity for kids in their community?

- Talk to your child's school about having more active time for students.
- Ask if the school can be used for physical activities during after-school hours.
- Involve your child in active programs with the YMCA, 4H, the Scouts, or Boys and Girls Clubs.
- Talk to community leaders about providing safe and active places for kids to play.
- Volunteer to help create or fix up community playgrounds.

## To learn more

**National Diabetes Education Program**
1-888-693-NDEP (6337)
www.YourDiabetesInfo.org

**American Diabetes Association**
1-800-DIABETES (342-2383)
www.diabetes.org/wizdom

**Kids Walk to School** (CDC Program)
www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/kidswalk/resources.htm

**National Association for Health and Fitness**
(716) 583-0521 • www.physicalfitness.org

**Parks and Recreation Youth Programs**
Search online to find programs in your state

**President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports**
(240) 276-9567 • www.fitness.gov

**Walkability Checklist**
www.walkinginfo.org; search for 'walkability checklist'

**The Ys of the USA**
1-800-872-9622 • www.ymca.net