

New guidelines urge diabetics to move more

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(HealthDay)—People with diabetes need to move more often than previously advised, new guidelines say.

To improve blood sugar management, people with diabetes should do three or more minutes of light activity every 30 minutes during prolonged periods of sitting, such as working on a computer or watching TV. This is especially true for those with type 2 diabetes, according to the latest recommendations from the American Diabetes Association (ADA).

These light activities include: overhead arm stretches, walking in place, leg lifts or extensions, desk chair swivels, torso twists and side lunges.

Previously, the association recommended light [physical activity](#) for every 90 minutes of prolonged inactivity.

"These updated guidelines are intended to ensure everyone continues to physically move around throughout the day—at least every 30 minutes—to improve blood glucose management," said guidelines lead author Sheri Colberg-Ochs, consultant/director of physical fitness for the ADA.

"This movement should be in addition to regular exercise, as it is highly recommended for people with diabetes to be active. Since incorporating more daily physical activity can mean different things to different people with diabetes, these guidelines offer excellent suggestions on what to do, why to do it and how to do it safely," she explained in an ADA news release.

The guidelines also emphasize specific types of exercise—aerobic exercise, [resistance training](#), flexibility and balance training and general lifestyle activity. They also elaborate on how each type of exercise helps patients.

For example, aerobic workouts benefit type 2 diabetes patients by improving blood sugar control, controlling weight and reducing heart

disease risk. Regular aerobic and resistance training offers health benefits for people with type 1 diabetes, including improved insulin sensitivity, heart fitness and muscle strength.

There are also activity suggestions for women with [gestational diabetes](#), who should do aerobic and resistance exercise. Also, people with prediabetes are urged to combine increased physical activity with healthy lifestyle changes to prevent progression to type 2 diabetes.

Supervised, structured exercise programs are more beneficial for [diabetes patients](#), according to the guidelines, which also outline how patients should monitor their [blood sugar](#) levels during physical activity.

The guidelines, based on a review of more than 180 studies and the input of diabetes and exercise experts, were published online Oct. 25 in the journal *Diabetes Care*.

More information: The American Academy of Family Physicians has more on [diabetes and exercise](#).

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