# Exercise and Type 2 Diabetes

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Exercise is a very important part of managing diabetes. The human body was designed to move and the lack of movement is a contributing factor to the onset of type 2 diabetes.The combination of the correct diet and the appropriate exercise can normalise blood sugar levels. There are many people that have been able to achieve this.

If a person has very high blood sugar levels they should check with their doctor before commencing any exercising regime.

Apart from the benefit of helping to normalise sugar levels exercise will make you feel better and more energetic. It is worth while.

**WHEN A TYPE 2 DIABETIC EXERCISES IT HELPS CONTROL BLOOD SUGAR LEVELS IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:**

* Exercise is known to improve the way that the body uses insulin
* Exercise burns excess body fat which improves insulin sensitivity
* Exercise improves muscle strength
* Lowers blood pressure
* Lowers bad cholesterol (LDL). Less LDL protects against blood vessel disease
* The risk of heart disease is reduced due to improved blood circulation
* Increases bone density and strength
* There is an increase in energy levels
* It reduces stress, promotes relaxation, releases tension and anxiety.

**GENTLE EXERCISE VERSUS INTENSE EXERCISE**

Firstly it is important to understand how exercise affects blood sugar levels. When a meal is consumed the liver absorbs a large percentage of the sugar. When energy is required, usually between meals the sugar is released from the liver into the blood stream. The sugar is the body’s fuel.

With gentle exercise over a longer duration, the muscles use sugar in a smooth fashion at around 20 times more than the normal rate. While this happens the insulin levels can drop in people not taking insulin, this in turn increases the risk of hypoglycaemia or low blood sugar levels.

When intense exercise occurs often the opposite effect can be seen. The blood sugar levels can elevate for a short time right after exercising. The body registers intense exercise as a stress. The body then releases stress hormones which in turn tell the liver to supply more sugar to fuel the activity. A diabetic should monitor the sugar levels to ensure that this is not occurring.

**WHAT TO DO BEFORE COMMENCING AN EXERCISE PROGRAM**

Exercise is a very important component of managing and dealing with type 2 diabetes. Because of cardiovascular risks and other diabetes associated risks a program should only be commenced after a doctors complete check up. The program should be designed to ensure that sugar levels are not elevated. It is usually recommended to start with a gentle low impact exercise program.