



Healthy Habits

Tips and resources for living well



Healthy autumn activities for the whole family

With cooler temperatures and lots of opportunities for together time, fall is a great season to enjoy healthy activities with family and start new traditions. The family who plays together stays healthy together! Here are a few easy, low cost or free ideas to kick start your fall of family fun:

Start your morning with a brisk walk or run. Wake up the kiddos, the dog or your partner to join you to get moving first thing. Not only does this rev up your metabolism for the rest of the day, it also gives you time to clear your mind and focus on the day ahead.

It's apple season! Take the family to a local orchard for a day of apple picking, or hit up your local farmers' market as a family to pick out seasonal produce. This can also be a great way to learn about new fruits and vegetables and try new recipes as a family.

Happy trails to you... Instead of hopping into the car for leaf peeping, go hiking or biking and enjoy the beauty of fall! Use Map My Hike or Map My Ride to find trails near you. Look for trails that have hills if you want to increase the intensity of your workout.

Tidy up outdoors. Rake the leaves in your yard. According to Harvard Health, a 125-pound person can burn 120 calories raking the lawn for just 30 minutes.

Take a post-meal walk. Walk with the family after a get-together like a big Thanksgiving or holiday meal. It gets you out of the house and helps you burn calories, too.

Going road tripping? Be sure to park at a few rest stops along the way to stretch and walk around. This is a great way for everyone to release some energy and fit in some exercise.

Go play outside! There are many games you can play outdoors in the fall, like flag football and ultimate Frisbee. You could also try a simple game of tag, going geocaching, or organizing a scavenger hunt.

Or try a new indoor activity. If the weather is too chilly or dreary for your liking, check out activities or events at the local community center, like indoor pick-up soccer, roller skating, or a friendly game of basketball, among others.

Early snowfall? Go out and play in the snow, build a snowman, go sledding, or shovel the driveway.

Join a local event. Check your newspaper for run/walk events in your area. Turkey trots, jingle bell walks, and other themed activities can be enjoyable for the whole family.

There are so many fun activities to do during fall—get outside, get moving, and enjoy the crisp autumn air!



Stay active to prevent diabetes

Diabetes is a serious condition that affects more than 20 million Americans. With diabetes, the body does not properly use glucose for energy. In order to be used, glucose has to move from the bloodstream into cells. Normally, your body makes a hormone called insulin, which helps the glucose enter cells to be used for energy. Diabetes causes the body to

either not make enough insulin or not use the insulin properly. As a result, glucose builds up in the blood, and if left untreated, can lead to serious health problems.

The cause of diabetes is not completely understood, but genetics and lifestyle factors play major roles. An important way to help reduce your risk of diabetes is by staying active. **Make sure to talk to your doctor before beginning a new exercise routine!**

Physical activity and diabetes: How can exercise help?

- Helps with weight management
- May lower glucose levels
- Makes the body's cells more sensitive to insulin, thereby improving its effectiveness

Use these tips to help you get started:

Set your exercise goal

Build to a goal of daily exercise totaling at least 150 minutes of moderate activity or 75 minutes of vigorous activity per week. Start with a duration and frequency that you feel comfortable with, and don't push yourself too hard!

Incorporate cardio

Cardio can be helpful for protecting your heart, controlling weight and also for managing your Type 2 diabetes risk by improving your body's use of insulin. To keep your blood sugar level low over time, aim to fit in some cardio exercise daily.

Examples of cardio include:

- Walking, jogging, hiking and using the treadmill
- Riding a bike or stationary bike
- Using an elliptical or rowing machine
- Swimming and dancing

Start strength training

Strength training builds muscle, and muscle burns calories, making it a great way to lose weight. Research shows that strength training helps manage your diabetes risk by improving how your body uses insulin and lowering glucose. Start by doing two sessions per week.

Examples of strength training include:

- Free-weight exercises that may require hand weights, dumbbells, or household items such as water jugs/bottles
- Machine-based exercises that utilize gym equipment
- Body weight exercises that only require resistance from your own weight, such as push-ups, squats, crunches, etc.

Stay active outside of regular exercise

Here are some examples of ways to add more activity to your day:

- Park away from the door and walk briskly to your destination
- Walk around while talking on the phone
- Wake up 15 minutes earlier to go for a walk outside before you begin getting ready for the day
- Designate a portion of your lunch or breaks to take a quick walk
- Take after-dinner walks around the neighborhood

Start with small goals!

We all know that we should exercise and stay active. But what does that mean, and how can you make lasting, healthy changes to your current habits? The key is to make small changes and work up to your ultimate goals. For example, add 10 extra minutes of exercise to each day this week.



Curb anger and regain control

Does your temper rise when a coworker in the next cube talks loudly on their cell phone? Or, say, when a team member steals your ideas? How about if a family member leaves dirty dishes in the sink *again*? Whether at home or work, everyone gets angry now and then. But blowing up habitually can harm your relationships, cloud your thinking, and may put you at higher risk for heart disease and other chronic conditions. Furthermore, people who are frequently angry often cope by adopting unhealthy habits such as overeating or smoking.

It's best to figure out what's behind your anger and think through ways to keep those triggers from setting you off. In the meantime, turn to these on-the-spot diffusers to keep your cool:

Take a break, step away, and breathe deeply. Say to yourself, "take it easy." Deep breathing is the simplest way to slow your heart rate and dissolve the rush of adrenaline that makes you want to lash out.

Count to 10. This age-old strategy gives you time and distraction—the keys to effective anger management.

Use logic on yourself. Remind yourself that getting angry is not going to fix anything. Logic defeats anger, and will help you get a better perspective.

Take a stretch or walk away. Physical activity is an extremely powerful way to release anger and stress. Moving your body helps shift your mind. If you can, go outside. Focus on the air, the scenery, and your feet as they hit the ground.

Try Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR). This technique involves purposely tensing and then releasing each muscle group, one by one, leaving you feeling more relaxed. Start with tensing, then relaxing, your forehead, then jaw, shoulders, and work your way down to your toes.

Practice mindfulness. Whenever angry thoughts about something that happened flood your mind, do a "reset" by being mindful of the present moment. For example, scan your body for tightness in your stomach or jaw, and focus on letting it go. Or focus your mind on slow, deep breathing. If angry thoughts arise, release their grip by imagining them floating by like clouds.

Problem-solve. Turn your energy toward finding a solution instead of lashing out. But keep in mind that you may not be able to fix all problems. Is the situation beyond your control? If so, try to move on instead of dwelling on it.

Finally, remember that when you're dealing with another person's anger, stay steady. Remain cool through the outburst and then choose an appropriate time to communicate your own point of view. Avoid responding defensively. Consider the possibility that you may have been wrong, or that you and your opponent may both be right.

If you are struggling with anger issues, consider getting help. Contact an anger specialist or behavioral health professional who can help you deal with anger-related problems. You can also call SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) **1-800-662-HELP (4357)** for assistance finding help and resources.



Diabetes Awareness Month Read: Tips for learning about diabetes risks, how to lower them, and healthy ways to live with diabetes from the American Diabetes Association.
(<http://www.diabetes.org/are-you-at-risk/?loc=atrisk-slabnav>)

What is Prediabetes?

Before people develop type 2 diabetes, they almost always have "prediabetes" — blood glucose levels that are higher than normal but not yet high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes.

Doctors sometimes refer to prediabetes as impaired glucose tolerance (IGT) or impaired fasting glucose (IFG), depending on what test was used when it was detected. This condition puts you at a higher risk for developing type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

No Clear Symptoms

There are no clear symptoms of prediabetes, so, you may have it and not know it.

Some people with prediabetes may have some of the symptoms of diabetes or even problems from diabetes already. You usually find out that you have prediabetes when being tested for diabetes.

If you have prediabetes, you should be checked for type 2 diabetes every one to two years.

Results indicating prediabetes are:

- An A1C of 5.7% – 6.4%
- Fasting blood glucose of 100 – 125 mg/dl
- An OGTT 2 hour blood glucose of 140 mg/dl – 199 mg/dl

Preventing Type 2 Diabetes

You will not develop type 2 diabetes automatically if you have prediabetes. For some people with prediabetes, early treatment can actually return blood glucose levels to the normal range.

Research shows that you can lower your risk for type 2 diabetes by 58% by:

- Losing 7% of your body weight (or 15 pounds if you weigh 200 pounds)
- Exercising moderately (such as brisk walking) 30 minutes a day, five days a week

Don't worry if you can't get to your ideal body weight. Losing even 10 to 15 pounds can make a huge difference.