

## Relationship between physical activity and blood sugar and medications

Physical activity has impact on blood sugar levels. This is because physical activity improves insulin sensitivity.

Physical activity is also important for reducing the risk of developing type 2 diabetes. It promotes weight loss and weight management. It has a long-term effect of improving cardiovascular disease outcomes

Moderate and vigorous intensity exercises tend to reduce blood sugar levels. Hence, there is need to monitor blood sugar levels before and after exercise. If a reduction in blood sugar is observed, it is important to adjust the dosage of insulin and other blood glucose lowering medications appropriately. Avoid exercising on an empty stomach.

However, some strength training exercises and competitive sports increase blood sugar because they encourage the release of stress hormones which counter the effect of insulin. However, this may not be the case all the time. Hence, it is important to monitor blood sugar levels while doing these exercises.

Low to moderate intensity physical activity like walking or cycling after a meal helps in reducing blood sugar after a meal. Brief high intensity exercises may reduce blood sugar levels for days after exercise.

These are general rules to follow before and during physical activity:

- Check blood sugar before starting a physical activity. If blood sugar is within healthy range (140-180mg/dl), proceed with the physical activity.
- If blood sugar level is less than 140mg/dl and using insulin, eat a meal with one count of carbohydrate (15g of carbohydrate).
- If blood sugar level is higher than 180mg/dl, wait for a while for the blood sugar to reduce to normal range before starting exercise
- If blood sugar is unusually high above or equal to 300mg/dl, postpone physical activity