UF UNIVERSITY *of* FLORIDA
IFAS Extension

FCS8613

Healthy Living: Exercise and Diabetes[1]

Sergio Romero and Linda B. Bobroff[2]

ENAFS
Elder Nutrition and Food Safety

Staying active is one of the best things you can do for your health. Regular physical activity can help you control your blood glucose levels, reduce body fat, and decrease your risk of heart disease. Staying active also can help you sleep better, improve posture and balance, maintain independent living, and improve quality of life. Below are some tips to help you create a fun and healthy exercise program. Start today!

Before Starting to Exercise

Talk to your health care team. They may want you to have a physical exam before starting your new program. Your team can suggest exercises or design a workout routine that is best for your medical and physical needs.

Getting Started

It isn't always easy to start exercising but once you find enjoyable activities, you'll see that staying active isn't as difficult as you thought!

Use the following tips to help get you started.

¨ Start slowly and build up.

¨ Find activities that you enjoy.

¨ Accumulate 20 to 40 minutes of moderate activity on most days of the week.

¨ Drink plenty of fluids before, during, and after your workout.

¨ To prevent injury, warm up and stretch before you start. Then, cool down and stretch again at the end of your exercise routine.

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1. La versión en español de este documento es *Vida Saludable: El ejercicio y la diabetes* (FCS8613-Span). This document is FCS8613, one of a series of the Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. First published March 2004. Revised February 2011. Visit the EDIS website at **http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu**.
2. Sergio Romero, MS, ATC, former ENAFS education assistant, and Linda B. Bobroff, PhD, RD, LD/N, professor; Department of Family, Youth, and Community Sciences; Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences; University of Florida; Gainesville, FL 32611.

Exercise Tips for People with Diabetes

¨ Get a thorough medical exam before you start to exercise.

¨ Work with your health care team to design an exercise program specific to your needs.

¨ Always wear your medical identification bracelet, necklace, or ID tag in case of an emergency.

¨ Check your blood glucose before and after exercise.

¨ If you start to feel shaky or nervous during your activity, your blood glucose may have gotten too low. Stop what you are doing and check your blood glucose to be sure you in your targeted range.

¨ Exercise 1 to 1½ hours after eating to prevent low blood glucose.

¨ Be prepared to treat low blood glucose. Always carry juice, hard candy, non-diet soda, raisins, or another fast-acting source of sugar.

¨ Inspect your feet daily and after exercising.

¨ Avoid exercising when your blood glucose is high (240 mg/dl or more).

Recommended Resources

American Diabetes Association. *Food & Fitness*. http://www.diabetes.org/food-and-fitness/fitness/ Accessed September 22, 2010.

Diabetes Exercise and Sports Association. http://www.diabetes-exercise.org/ Accessed September 22, 2010.

National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse (NDIC). *What I need to know about Physical Activity and Diabetes*. http://diabetes.niddk.nih.gov/dm/pubs/physical_ez/ Accessed September 22, 2010.