

# Twitter Chat: **Advising People with Diabetes to be Physically Active: Get Beyond 'Go for a Walk'**

## **Physical Activity Guidelines in a Nutshell**

Recap the ADA physical activity 2018 standards and recommendations for **4 types of physical activity** for people with #diabetes from @AmDiabetesAssn [http://care.diabetesjournals.org/content/diacare/41/Supplement\\_1/S38.full.pdf](http://care.diabetesjournals.org/content/diacare/41/Supplement_1/S38.full.pdf) (@HopeWarshaw)

Aerobic activity from @AmDiabetesAssn standards: Most adults with #diabetes should engage in **150 min or more of moderate-to-vigorous intensity aerobic activity per week**, spread over at least 3 days/week, with no more than 2 consecutive days without activity. (@HopeWarshaw)

Resistance training from @AmDiabetesAssn standards: Most adults with #diabetes should engage in **2-3 sessions/week of resistance exercise** on nonconsecutive days. (@HopeWarshaw)

Reduce sedentary time from @amdiabetesassn standards: All adults, particularly with type 2 #diabetes, should decrease time spent in daily sedentary behavior. **Interrupt prolonged sitting every 30 min** for blood glucose benefits. (@HopeWarshaw)

Added in 2017. Flexibility and balance training from @AmDiabetesAssn standards: Recommended **2-3 times/week** for older adults with #diabetes to increase flexibility, muscular strength, and balance. (@HopeWarshaw)

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## Staying Current with the Science of Physical Activity

I **network with certified personal trainers** which helps me increase competence. (@Eatingsoulfully)

I became **certified in chair yoga**. (@lorenadrigo)

Review **@AmDiabetesAssn standards**. See conclusion pg 44: "routine testing is not recommended." However, careful history taking and assessment of CVD risk factors are important. #diabetes (@HopeWarshaw)

I'll **ask a physical therapist or exercise physiologist** for advice when I don't have an answer (@JasGonzalvo)

**Credentialed exercise professionals** and health focused exercise programs can help people know how to exercise safely and get results. The "I Hate to Exercise" Book from @AmDiabetesAssn is a great "how to" exercise resource for consumers. (@CharAHayes)

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## **Selling the Power of Physical Activity**

For the person with type 2 #diabetes I describe physical activity as **free medicine** and then explain the mechanism. Most are surprised at this concept. (@Eatingsoulfully)

For the person with #prediabetes I explain how exercise can **prevent/slow down the onset of diabetes**. (@Eatingsoulfully)

Exercise a powerful medicine with very **few negative side effects**. (@HopeWarshaw)

People like to hear how exercise does the same for them as some of the medications in terms of **helping with underlying insulin resistance**. (@susangweiner)

Better glucose readings, weight loss, **improved sleep patterns, less stress**. (@MaureenSRN)

Exercise benefits: Improved blood glucose, blood pressure, **stronger bones, improved flexibility**. (@susangweiner)

**Focus on the benefits** with blood glucose management including hours after the exercise (@diabeteseveryday)

Hands down **having more energy**. (@JaneKDickinson)

**Breathing easier, walking upstairs easier**, clothes fitting looser, going down in a clothes size, notice of looking healthier by family, friends, others. They're all motivating for most people. (@HopeWarshaw)

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## **Initiating the Physical Activity Conversation**

**Be positive, supportive and non-judgmental.** Many people dread, hate, or fear exercise. Sometimes just the word triggers negative emotions. (@JaneKDickinson)

With initial questions **I dig for basic details:** do they exercise? If not, why not? If they do, what do they do? What are some barriers to exercise, exercising more? What exercise do they enjoy? Dislike? (@HopeWarshaw)

**Ask about their “regular daily routine.”** Then work body movement into their “regular day.” We don’t want to make things harder (@diabetesevryday)

I ask about a time in their life when they were more active and how they felt. **Identify their strengths and build on them.** (@JaneKDickinson)

Asking opens the door for discussion. Ask: Do you exercise? or Are you physically active? Then follow with: **What has worked? What has been hard?** And be open to whatever they answer! (@JaneKDickinson)

**Do you have any equipment at home?** i.e. stationary bike, rowing machine etc. I work with adults and basic/starting questions are the same for all. (@Eatingsoulfully)

**Ask about concerns** with starting to be more physically active. Concerned about hypoglycemia? (@susangweiner)

Do you feel **strapped for time to exercise?** Schedule exercise in your calendar & treat as appointment (@susangweiner)

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## **Integrating Physical Activity into the Day**

Let clients know that even **standing for a bit after 30 min** of sitting may improve blood glucose (@JasGonzalvo)

**Schedule the last 15 minutes of your lunch break** to plan for physical activity after your meal (@JasGonzalvo)

I don't have friends close by so **I call and talk to them while I walk** (@diabetesevryday)

**Make body movements with intention.** When doing laundry, use this time to do a certain number of squats. Start with a few. Build up. Doesn't take time away from your chores of the day. (@diabetesevryday)

**Repeatedly walking up and down flights of stairs!** Can do that in bad weather & without access to a gym (@JasGonzalvo)

For those just starting out and say life is too busy, I recommend adding movement like **wall pushups + heel lifts during tv commercial breaks.** @LifeScanDI (@diabetesevryday)

**Interval training exercise** is fun & easy to implement. Choose 3 favorite upbeat songs. March in place for 2 minutes. Dance for 1 minute. Pause for 10 seconds. Repeat cycle. Great way to start exercising (@lorenadrage)

For those physically able, **take the stairs,** never take elevators or escalators (@HopeWarshaw)

**Break down the 150 minutes recommendation** into 5 days; perhaps 20 minutes 3x a day. Find out the person's motivating factors! (@MaureenSRN)

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## **Setting the Stage for Success**

Highly encourage **family focused activities**, like playing with kids or grandkids, rarely feels like exercise. (@MaureenSRN)

I live by example and **share my trials and tribulations** with exercise! (@Eatingsoulfully)

I assure people that **everything counts**. It's very discouraging when people think the activity they do "doesn't count." (@JaneKDickinson)

I explain that **"exercise" is not just aerobic activity**, like walking, running. That there are now four different types of physical activity. All are important to health and #diabetes care. (@HopeWarshaw)

If you don't like the gym "don't go"! **Do something you love** hiking, dog walking, gardening (@susangweiner)

**Fitness trackers can be a huge motivator** in getting movement every day. Pick your level of tech comfort. (@susangweiner)

If you go to a gym to exercise after work, **pack your gear the night before**. Make sure it's ready to go with you when you leave for the day (@HopeWarshaw)

**Reward yourself**. After reaching a workout goal, schedule a massage or take in a movie (@susangweiner)

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## **Physical Activity and Hypoglycemia**

There's still a notion that just having #diabetes puts people at risk of hypoglycemia. Just not the case. We need to **educate** about this (@HopeWarshaw)

Let people who do minimal physical activity and **not at risk for hypoglycemia** know that they generally don't need to snack before, after exercise. (@HopeWarshaw)

**Check glucose levels before new activities** or long (hour plus) classes allow some control on situation. (@MaureenSRN)

**I emphasize NOT eating more to prepare for exercise.** Adjust medications if necessary and make exercise part of a healthy food plan. Extra food only for emergencies if at all possible (@JaneKDickinson)

I talk about it as an experiment. **Have a portable, easy-to-eat snack with you if you need it,** but check your glucose. Sometimes you might need it, many times you don't. (@zsquaredmama)

**Needs may change as level of fitness increases,** as well as the duration and intensity of the workout (@susangweiner)

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## **Dispel the Notion that Exercise Alone Promotes Weight Loss**

Remind folks of **exercise rewards, other than weight loss**. Keep it positive! @LifeScanDI (@susangweiner)

I discuss that research shows **how much you eat and what you eat** are far more influential to weight loss than physical activity (@HopeWarshaw)

Weight loss requires calorie restriction. Physical activity **aids in keeping lost weight off**. (@lorenadrigo)

I emphasize all the other benefits associated with exercise and if they experience weight loss it's an added bonus. My mantra: **“concentrate on the behavior.”** (@Eatingsoulfully)

**Change how we THINK about exercise.** Promote positive benefits other than weight loss. @LifeScanDI (@susangweiner)

It's not exercise alone that will improve overall health/result in weight loss, it's the **combo of exercise, healthy food choices, improved mental health**, and, for many, medications that are important (@JasGonzalvo)

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## Motivational Techniques

**Yoga is for the body & soul.** It also uses your own body weight for exercise. #yoga (@lorenadrage)

Put **before and after pictures up** on refrigerator, on mirror or elsewhere. Motivation reminders! (@HopeWarshaw)

Love teaching **"checking in pairs."** Check pre and post exercise to collect the real time data of how your readings trend w exercise. (@diabetesevryday)

**Enlist your spouse** to exercise with you. Good for a relationship (@diabetesevryday)

Some people, esp competitive types of people, like **counting things like steps** with an app, device or pedometers. For some it's motivating to achieve set goals. (@HopeWarshaw)

Using **fitness trackers** can help people see how physical activity accumulated throughout the day. Set activity goals and reach them. (@CharAHayes)

Use the **decisional balance technique** from Motivational Interviewing: write down advantages and disadvantages of exercising/being active and then discuss. (@JaneKDickinson)

**Create a music playlist** for exercise. Exercise to your favorite tunes to keep you motivated. (@susangweiner)

Helping people feel they are instilling good habits in their kids or grandkids with things like **family walks** helps to keep people motivated. (@diabetesevryday)

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