

Top ten tips to combat diabetes this New Year

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(Medical Xpress)—Getting your family and friends to support you in being physically active and setting yourself physical activity goals are among the top ten tips scientifically proven to help combat Type 2 diabetes.

Newcastle University researchers carried out a large-scale review of all [randomised controlled trials](#) examining changing physical activity and [Type 2 diabetes](#). They analysed the ways people were encouraged to change their behaviour and linked them to whether it changed the control of their diabetes. From this analysis they devised a list of the successful strategies which help people become more active and improve their [glucose control](#).

Publishing today in [Diabetes Care](#), author Professor Mike Trenell who specialises in physical activity and metabolic research at Newcastle University said: "The message that we have known for a while is that people with Type 2 diabetes can benefit significantly by moving more and sitting less. What we have now shown is how people can best help themselves to be physically active.

"While being more physically active often conjures up images of hours on a [treadmill](#) or competitive marathon running - walking, using the stairs and just moving more in [everyday life](#) can be effective in helping manage diabetes.

"So this New Year, before reaching for the remote and yet another

leftover Christmas treat, people should look at how they can move more and sit less. This list provides some useful tips on how to make those New Year's Resolutions a reality. Aside from general improvements in health, its likely that you will look and feel better too."

The Newcastle University team have pulled together the research on the topic and come up with the top ten tips to combat Type 2 diabetes:

- Set physical activity goals – make them specific, measurable and time dependent (such as walking 10,000 steps a day).
- Review your goals – and it doesn't matter if they're short or long-term activity goals. Make time to think about whether you are achieving what you want.
- Plan in advance a time in your day to be active either at home or at work.
- Get friends or family members involved in your activity, walking with you or helping set or monitor goals.
- Build on your activity success – if you're more active in one area of your daily life such as taking the [stairs](#), then build on that to increase activity in another such as walking to a bus stop further away.
- Get support – phone calls from your GP practice work as well as face-to-face sessions.
- Find out what activities are going on in your local area and when they take place – research shows that just having that information galvanises people into action.
- Build on past success - motivate yourself by thinking of a time where

you were more active and how it made you feel.

- What might stop you? - Think what might get in the way of you reaching your activity goal and plan ways around it.
- How is this going to make you healthier? - Seek out information specifically about the benefits of [physical activity](#) for you. This might not be just improved diabetes control but looking better, feeling more energetic and meeting people.

Between 2006 and 2011, the number of people diagnosed with diabetes in England has increased by 25 per cent, from 1.9 million to 2.5 million. It's estimated that up to 850,000 people have diabetes but don't know it. The cost of treating diabetes is a staggering £10.3 billion a year – around 10% of the entire NHS budget.

However, as previous Newcastle University research has shown, patients with Type 2 diabetes can walk 45 minutes every day and get the same improvement in blood glucose control as from a major class of drugs.

But getting people with Type 2 diabetes to be more active can prove difficult.

The Newcastle team carried out a systematic review of over 8000 studies and examined 17 studies in depth to understand how health professionals helped support people with Type 2 diabetes to become more physically active and in turn improve their diabetes control. A total of 21 behaviours were identified which had a positive impact on people's health.

Moving more helps improve glucose control by keeping blood flowing to the muscles, maintaining the uptake of sugar from the blood into the muscles where it can be stored or burnt. The increase in energy

expenditure also helps prevent weight gain, a major driver for the worsening of diabetes over time.

Professor Mike Trenell adds: "There's growing evidence that moving more and keeping active not only prevents Type 2 diabetes but is critical in protecting us as we grow older.

"The science is clear about the benefits of a moving more and sitting less to [diabetes control](#). But, making the advice into action is much more difficult – we hope that these tips will help people with [diabetes](#) improve self management through being more [physically active](#) and possibly look and feel better too."

Provided by Newcastle University

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