

Lifestyle tips for better diabetes control

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(HealthDay)—Managing diabetes is more than just taking medication. Some adjustments in your daily lifestyle can have a huge impact on your overall well-being.

In fact, for some people, this can be enough to control [blood sugar](#) without medication. But it's true that old habits die hard.

Here are easy ways to make meaningful changes.

Regular exercise helps you lower blood glucose (sugar) as well as [lose weight](#), according to the American Diabetes Association. Get active with fitness options you enjoy, like gardening, hiking or simply walking your dog. Set yourself up for success by setting realistic goals. Start with 10 minutes a day and build up to 30 over several weeks.

Start with small adjustments when it comes to diet, too. Replace white bread and pasta with whole grains, eat fresh fruit instead of cake and cookies, and switch to no-fat dairy. If you're unsure which dietary changes will have the most impact, schedule a session with a certified [diabetes](#) educator who can map out a healthier eating approach for you.

Also, make a serious effort to manage stress. Hormones that your body produces when stressed cause your liver to make more glucose. So, less stress means better control of blood sugar and an end to emotional eating. Yoga and tai chi are everyday exercises that ease stress, and deep breathing and meditation are relaxation techniques you can do anywhere.

Finally, develop a support network. Whether in person or online, the other members of a support group can provide the motivation you need to follow through on your lifestyle makeover. And you, in turn, might provide the motivation for others.

Change is rarely easy, but these steps will help today and may prevent [diabetes complications](#) in the future.

More information: To help you reach fitness goals, the American Diabetes Association has ideas on [how to be more active during the day](#),

both at home and at work.

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