

Diabetes and Weight Loss

What are the benefits of losing weight when you have diabetes?

If you live with type 2 diabetes and obesity, losing 5% of your body weight (or losing 10 pounds if you weigh 200 pounds) helps to improve your blood sugar, lipids, and blood pressure. Weight loss also improves your mobility, physical and sexual function, and health-related quality of life.

What eating plan should someone with diabetes follow to lose weight?

- Weight loss happens when you take in less energy than your body needs. Your weight loss eating plan should be personalized to meet your protein, fat, and carbohydrate needs while still resulting in weight loss of 1-2 pounds per week.
- While there is no agreement on the ideal amount of fat intake for persons with diabetes, we do know fat quality is important.
- A Med-style eating pattern, rich in healthy fats and high-quality carbohydrates can improve control of both your blood sugar (glucose) and blood lipids.

**Remember that as you lose weight you should check with your primary care provider about adjusting your diabetes medication.

What about physical activity?

Physical activity is important to anyone planning to lose weight and keep it off. The recommendations are the same for persons with or without diabetes. Here are some things to keep in mind about physical activity when you have diabetes:

- Physical activity can lower your blood sugar up to 24 hours or more after your workout. It does so by making your body more sensitive to insulin.
- If you use insulin or oral diabetes pills that cause your pancreas to make more insulin, you should check your blood sugar before doing any physical activity. This is important to prevent hypoglycemia (low blood sugar). Talk to your diabetes doctor, nurse, dietitian, or pharmacist to find out if you are at risk for low blood sugars.
- Use this guide to help you exercise safely.

Lower than 100 mg/dL	Your blood sugar may be too low to exercise safely. Before you begin your workout eat a small snack with 15 to 30 grams of carbohydrates, such as 4 ounces (1/2 cup) of juice or regular (not diet) soda, or 1 tablespoon of sugar or honey.
100-250 mg/dL	For most people, this is a safe pre-exercise blood sugar range.
250mg/dL or higher	Be careful — your blood sugar may be too high to exercise safely. Rest and check levels again later.