

Diabetes Information for You and Your Family

How To Walk Farther and Faster

Why walk more?

You are already walking and that's great! By walking more, you are taking steps to stay healthy and live longer so you can:

- Be there for your children, grandchildren, and other family members.
- Be an active and helpful member of your community.
- Serve as an Elder and share your wisdom.

How much do you need to walk?

To take care of your diabetes, build up to walking at least 30 minutes on most days of the week. Keep track of the number of minutes you walk each day.

- If you cannot walk 30 minutes all at once, try walking 3 times a day for 10 minutes.
- Listen to your body. Some days you may feel like you can walk longer. Other days you may need to take it easier.
- Keep up a good pace. A good pace is when you can talk while you walk without running out of breath. If you can sing while you walk, you may want to walk faster.
- Try to walk a little farther and faster each week.

How do you keep going?

- Choose the days and times that you are most likely to walk. Some people set aside the same time every day for their walks.
- Walk when you have the most energy or when the weather is the nicest.



“Walking with a group of friends or family is a great way to stay on track.”

Katie Wilson (right), Choctaw / Creek Tribes, Oklahoma

- Make it family time with your children or grandchildren.
- Walk with friends. Find a walking partner or two. Laugh and have fun.

What if you have health concerns?

- Check with your health care provider about your plan to walk more. Talk about any pain you have when you walk.
- If you have chest pain, nausea, or shortness of breath, these may be signs of a serious health problem. Call a health care provider right away.

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What if you miss a few days?

If you miss a few days of walking, don't be hard on yourself or give up. Things happen in life.

- **Are you stressed or too busy?**
Set aside time to take a few short walks.
- **Do you feel sore?**
Stretching can help you move and feel better.
- **Is the weather bad?**
Walk indoors—in your home, at a store, or at a wellness center.

Start back up when you can. Build slowly toward your goal.

How can you protect your feet?

- Wear shoes that fit well and that cushion and support your feet.
- Avoid wearing shoes that rub your feet, toes, or heels.
- Wear a clean pair of socks that are not too tight and that keep your feet dry.
- Check your feet every day for blisters, sores, redness, or swelling. If you find any of these, call your health care provider right away.

What are some safety tips?

- Choose a safe place to walk.
- Take a cell phone with you.
- Take water with you.
- Take glucose tablets or a few pieces of sugar-sweetened hard candy in case your blood sugar gets low.

Walk your way to a healthy future!

By walking, you are taking care of your diabetes so you can be there for your family and your community.



“I walk during the middle of my day. Walking gives me energy. It helps get rid of stress so I feel better.”

*Carmela Ramirez,
Kickapoo Tribe,
Oklahoma*

I will take these steps to keep walking or walk more:

See *How To Get Started Walking* for tips on beginning a walking program.
Go to www.ihs.gov/diabetes and search **walking** in the upper right corner of webpage.