

Exercise Guidelines for Students with Diabetes

Make sure a source of glucose is available to this student at all times. Pre-exercise and during prolonged exercise (1 hour or if very intense) blood glucose testing is recommended to prevent a hypoglycemic (low blood sugar) reaction.

Exercise of any type is great for blood glucose control. When you exercise, your body needs more energy, so it starts to use some of the glucose that's in the blood. This can lower your blood glucose for hours, sometimes up to 24 hours after the activity if you exercise long and hard. This increased sensitivity to insulin may mean you need to change your insulin dose. Talk to your diabetic management team to decide what's best for you.

Preventing Hypoglycemia

Since exercise increases your sensitivity to insulin, your risk for a low after exercise increase. You can prevent hypoglycemia during and after exercise with a little planning. Here are some tips to remember when you're exercising.

1. Talk with your diabetic management team to decide whether you should change your insulin dose when you exercise.
2. Consider when you last took insulin and if it may be peaking during your activity as it may put you at greater risk for a low.
3. Check your blood glucose before you exercise.
 - o If it's low, eat a snack and wait until your blood glucose comes up. For some people, even if your blood glucose isn't low, you may still need to eat a snack. It'll depend on your activity and how your body reacts to the activity. Check with your diabetic management team about when you should eat a snack.
 - o If it's higher than 240, check for ketones. If ketones are present, don't exercise. If you have ketones and exercise, your ketones levels may get higher and you could develop DKA.
4. Pack a bag of supplies and keep it close by. Include snacks in case of hypoglycemia as well as snacks to prevent hypoglycemia including:
 - o Glucose tablets and/or gel
 - o Hard candy
 - o Juice boxes
 - o Crackers with peanut butter
 - o Crackers and cheese
 - o Granola bar
 - o Other healthy snacks
 - o A big bottle of water
 - o Blood glucose meter and supplies
5. Take a short break to check your blood glucose and eat a snack if you're exercising for longer than an hour, like when playing in a soccer game.
6. Check your blood glucose often after exercising. Remember, the effects of exercise on your blood glucose can last for up to 24 hours.
7. Tell your teammates, teacher, coach, or person you're exercising with the signs to look for in case you start to go low. Also [teach them](#) what to do to help you.
8. Always wear your medical ID bracelet.