

The Importance of Exercise for Diabetics Cannot be Overstated, Even in the COVID Era

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Introduction

Physical activity and exercise are critical for type 2 diabetes management. Physical activity effectively reduces hospitalization rates of individuals with coronavirus illness 2019 because it benefits the immune system (COVID-19).

The goal of a study published in *Therapeutic Advances in Endocrinology and Metabolism* is to see how useful physical activity is for persons with type 2 Diabetes and COVID-19.

Physical Inactivity and Health

Increased physical activity, according to UK researchers, is a crucial aspect of treatment for many chronic conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, and musculoskeletal disorders. Physical activity also provides numerous health benefits, including a reduction in mortality rates [1].

Physical activity is linked to lower systolic pressure and a lower risk of diabetes-related complications, death, and heart attack in patients with type 2 Diabetes. In addition, one study found that exercise improves insulin sensitivity in type 2 diabetic patients. Physical activity can also help you from having type 2 Diabetes.

Inactivity has a significant impact on world health. It's linked to an increased risk of COVID-19 hospitalization.

Physical inactivity also accounts for 7.2 percent of type 2 diabetes cases and 9.4 percent of global mortality. Physical inactivity was found to be prevalent in 57.7% of people at risk for type 2 diabetes and 57.3 percent of the general population, according to a global survey.

Types of Physical Activity

Running, jogging, cycling, and swimming are examples of aerobic exercises that range in intensity from moderate to strenuous. Individuals with type 2 diabetes should do these activities to improve their quality of life. High-intensity interval training (HIIT) entails alternating periods of intensive exercise with times of relaxation.

Resistance training consists of workouts that use bodyweight, gadgets, or resistance bands to increase muscle strength and stamina. Flexibility and balance are important for maintaining range of motion and may be advantageous to diabetics. Yoga, tai chi, and body stretches are examples of flexibility exercises [2].

Benefits of Physical Activity

Physical activity is good for both acute and chronic health problems. Low- to moderate-intensity exercise, for example, has been shown to improve insulin action in persons with type 2 diabetes in trials. Low-intensity and high-intensity walking have both been shown to improve insulin sensitivity in women with type 2 diabetes.

In type 2 diabetes patients, exercise alone is useful in preventing increases in blood sugar, body weight, blood pressure, heart disease, and death. In persons with type 2 diabetes, resistance exercise training may help with blood sugar management and insulin action.

Aerobic exercise may help persons with type 2 diabetes improve their fitness and quality of life. Stretching increases joint range of motion and flexibility but has little effect on blood sugar control.

Weight loss is aided by increased unstructured physical activity such as housework, dog walking, or gardening. People with prediabetes, as well as those with type 1 and type 2 diabetes, benefit from walking, especially after meals.

COVID-19 and Diabetes

Diabetes is linked to a higher risk of infection, particularly respiratory viruses. Diabetes is more common in patients with severe COVID-19, and diabetics are more likely to be admitted to the intensive care unit (ICU). They have a higher rate of comorbidities as well.

COVID-19 and Physical Activity

The level of physical exercise and immunity has a good relationship. Exercise training is linked to improved immunological defense and blood sugar regulation, both of which could contribute to COVID-19-induced immune cell activation. Exercise activates immune cells and, through lowering adipose tissue, increases the immunological response indirectly [3].

In older persons, regular exercise improves the effectiveness of flu vaccine. Physical activity appears to be a beneficial strategy for avoiding hospitalization due to respiratory viral illnesses like COVID-19, according to several studies.

Regular exercise may also help to avoid the start of COVID-19 disease.

Physical Activity for Managing Diabetes in a COVID Era

There have been stringent lockdowns and the imposition of social distance rules as a result of the COVID-19 epidemic, both of which have resulted in decreased physical activity. Exercise programmes that may be done at home can help you maintain your daily physical activity levels. Furthermore, it is both safe and healthy for diabetics.

Dancing, playing with children, cleaning, gardening, and taking online workout programmes are all options. Blood sugar management can also be improved with home-based exercise therapy regimens [4].

Type 2 diabetics are already less active and sedentary than people who do not have the disease. As a result, the COVID-19 pandemic has had even more detrimental effects on physical activity levels.

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Recommendations for Physical Activity Levels During the Pandemic

Physical activity awareness and compliance have increased as a result of technology-based techniques. In the present pandemic, such tactics may be more effective.

For persons with type 2 diabetes, internet-delivered physical activity promotion initiatives may be more effective than traditional approaches. Monitoring physical activity, goal planning, and mentor phone/email support are examples of these.

In people who are unable to follow the standards, even ten and a half minutes of light-intensity physical activity has a positive influence on heart and metabolic health. For individuals to obtain health benefits, a daily step count of more than 7,500 steps appears to be sufficient [4,5].

Individuals who are just starting an exercise routine should gradually increase their exercise intensity. The goal is to walk more than 7,500 steps each week until they can complete 210 minutes of moderate-intensity activity or 125 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity.

Individuals might benefit from daily step counts and activity trackers to manage physical activity difficulties. They also assist in the monitoring and prescription of physical exercise.

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