

# Diabetes Information for You and Your Family

## How To Get Started Walking

### Why walk?

Our bodies are meant to get up and walk—to the mailbox, down the road, around the neighborhood.

Walking can help you 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.

All you need is a sturdy pair of shoes, a few minutes, and a safe place to walk. Give walking a try!

### How does walking help?

Walking helps your mind, body, spirit, and emotions. It can help you:

- Have more energy by keeping your blood sugar, blood pressure, cholesterol, and weight in good ranges.
- Stay active and prevent injuries by keeping your muscles and bones strong.
- Feel calmer and less stressed by lifting your spirits.

### Is walking right for you?

Walking is right for most people. If you are not sure that walking is right for you, ask your health care provider:

- Is walking right for me?
- How much walking is right for me?
- Do I need to check my blood sugar before and/or after I walk?

### How can you get started?

Start slowly. You may be able to walk only a few minutes at first. That's okay. Try these tips for getting started:

- Walk at your own pace.
- Walk up and down your driveway or around your home.
- Walk around while you watch TV or talk on the phone.
- Park a little farther from the store.

Try to build up to walking 3 to 5 minutes, 2 or 3 times a day. With time, you may be able to walk farther and go faster. Keep track of the minutes you walk. You may even find that you feel better and stronger.



**“I started walking so I will be healthier and less stressed. I want to be there for my family for a long time.”**

*Gloria Anico, Kickapoo / Seminole Tribes, Oklahoma*

## How To Get Started Walking

### What may keep you from walking?

There are many reasons people do not walk:

- They feel they are too busy.
- They feel tired, sad, or sluggish.
- They feel out of shape or have aches and pains.
- They feel shy about walking. They may worry that people will think they are showing off.
- All of these feelings are common. With a little time, and by walking a few minutes each day, these feelings often pass.
- **Remember:** You are walking not just for yourself, but to be there for the people you love.

### Imagine looking forward to your walks.

- Picture walking as an inspirational part of your day – a special time either alone or with others.
- Be thankful while walking. Give thanks to the people who have gone before you. Be grateful for your body, your family, and friends.
- Enjoy the outdoors. Walk in the woods, along a dirt path, in a park, or by the ocean.
- Make it family time with your children or grandchildren.
- Walk with friends. Find a walking partner or two. Laugh and have fun.

### Today is a good day for a walk!

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

### I think walking will help me:

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### To start walking, I will:

- Walk at these times: \_\_\_\_\_
- Walk at these places: \_\_\_\_\_

### Other steps I will take:

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See *How To Walk Farther and Faster* for tips on walking more.  
Go to [www.ihs.gov/diabetes](http://www.ihs.gov/diabetes) and search **walking** in the upper right corner of webpage.