



## Walking to Stay Healthy During Pregnancy



You are now 20 weeks pregnant. You were diagnosed last week with gestational diabetes (GDM). You now check your blood sugar 4 times a day (in the morning before eating and 2 hours after each meal). So far it is always at target goal.

At your clinic visit last week, your health care provider recommended that you start increasing your physical activity. You do not do any daily activity right now. You are trying to decide what to do to increase your physical activity.

**1. Why do you think your health care provider recommended you start doing some physical activity?**

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**2. What kind of physical activity would you do?**

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**3. What are some ways you would safely increase your physical activity during pregnancy?**

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## 1. Why do you think your health care provider recommended you start doing some physical activity?

Being active during pregnancy can help a woman:

- decrease insulin resistance
- lower blood sugar
- gain a healthy amount of weight
- handle stress
- have energy
- have fun
- get in shape for labor and delivery

## 2. What kind of physical activity would you do?

Some kinds of safe physical activities are:

- walking
- swimming
- water aerobics
- dancing
- gardening
- upper body movement
- general daily activity

## 3. What are some ways you would safely increase your physical activity during pregnancy?

These are things a woman with pregnancy and diabetes can do to stay safe during physical activity:

- check with the health care provider/team before starting or changing physical activity
- balance physical activity with food/medicine
- start a new physical activity slowly
- gently stretch legs and arms before and after physical activity
- do gentle activity like walking
- check blood sugar often
- do activity after a meal or snack
- wear comfortable shoes and loose fitting clothing
- drink water before, during and after physical activity
- carry diabetes identification
- carry a form of sugar
- listen to their body
- stop activity if there is any pain
  - contact health care provider right away if cramps, abdominal pain or painful contractions
- avoid:
  - extreme temperatures (especially if very hot, cold or humid)
  - activities that cause “bearing down” (such as sit-ups)
  - lying on the back
  - bouncing movements (such as jumping jacks, jumping rope or high impact aerobics)
  - getting up quickly from lying down



