



Diabetes and Your Child: Safe Exercise

Like food and insulin, exercise plays a large role in managing your child's blood sugar. It helps reduce the amount of **glucose** (sugar) buildup in the blood. This buildup is called high blood sugar (**hyperglycemia**). But too much exercise can cause your child's blood sugar to get too low. This is called low blood sugar (**hypoglycemia**). That's why it's important to monitor your child's blood sugar closely when he or she exercises. You will have to balance exercise with food and insulin to make sure your child is in his or her target range for blood sugar.

Prevention Is Key

The best way to manage your child's blood sugar during exercise is to plan for it. These are some other things you can do to help keep your child safe during exercise:

- Check your child's blood sugar before and after activity.
- Have your child eat a snack before exercising when his or her blood sugar is below target range. Try half a sandwich, crackers and milk, a piece of fruit, or an energy bar.
- Make sure your child's emergency glucagon kit is nearby. Glucagon is a shot that raises blood sugar quickly.
- Do not let your child exercise if his or her blood sugar is above the target range. Instead, test for ketones. If ketone levels are high he or she may need to be taken to the hospital. (Your healthcare team will talk more about this with you.)

Playing Sports

Blood sugar can get low when your child exercises. Lows can last up to 8 hours after exercise. That's why checking your child's blood sugar before and after playing sports is so important. Here are some other tips for making sure your child is safe during sports:

- Tell coaches that your child has diabetes.
- Give your child's coach a list of low blood sugar symptoms. Also, give the coach instructions explaining what to do when the child has a low. Be sure the coach knows when to call 911.
- Pack high-carb snacks for your child. This could be a granola bar and a sports drink.
- Be sure your child has fast-acting sugar, such as glucose tablets or a snack, on hand in case his or her blood sugar gets low.
- Ask the coach to keep snacks, glucose tablets, and glucagon in the team sports bag. Make sure the coach or another adult is trained to use the glucagon.
- Do not allow your child to practice or play in a game if his or her blood sugar is too high and ketones are present.



Your child should test his blood sugar before and after activities.