



# 5 Great Workouts for Type 2 Diabetes

**E**xercise helps you to lose weight and improve balance, which is important because many people with type 2 diabetes are at risk for obesity and for falls. “I fully recommend that anyone over 40 with diabetes include balance training as part of their weekly routine, at least two to three days per week,” says Dr Sheri Colberg-Ochs, founder of the Diabetes Motion Academy in Santa Barbara, California, and professor emerita of exercise science at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia. “It can be as simple as practising balancing on one leg at a time, or something more complex like tai chi. Lower body and core resistance exercises also double as balance training.” Here are five great workouts you can easily work into your daily routine.

## 1 Walking

“Walking is easy for people to do,” Colberg-Ochs says. “All you need is a good pair of shoes and somewhere to go. Walking is probably one of the most prescribed activities for people with type 2 diabetes.” Brisk walking done at a pace that raises the heart rate is an aerobic exercise, and studies show beneficial effects when people with diabetes participate in aerobic activities at least three days a week for a total of 150 minutes.

## 2 Tai Chi

Tai chi is ideal for people with diabetes because it provides fitness and stress reduction in one. Tai chi also improves balance and may reduce nerve damage, a common diabetic complication—though the latter benefit “remains unproven,” says Colberg-Ochs. Still, she emphasises that working on your balance daily is a critical component of staying on your feet as you age, and living well and independently throughout your lifetime. “If you don’t do tai chi, incorporate some other balance exercises into your weekly routine to reduce your risk of falling,” says Colberg-Ochs.

## 3 Swimming

Swimming is another aerobic exercise—and an ideal one for people with type 2 diabetes because it doesn’t put pressure on your joints. “Being buoyed by the water is less stressful for you,” Colberg-Ochs says. Swimming also is easier on your feet than other forms of exercise, such as walking or jogging. Very often diabetes reduces blood flow to the small blood vessels of your extremities and you can lose sensation in your feet as a result. People with diabetes must avoid foot injuries, even minor cuts or blisters, because they can be slow to heal and are prone to infection.

## 4 Weight Training

Weight training builds muscle mass, important for those with type 2 diabetes. “If you lose muscle mass, you have a lot harder time maintaining your blood sugar,” Colberg-Ochs says. Plan for resistance exercise or weight training at least twice a week as part of your diabetic management plan—three is ideal, but always schedule a rest day between weight workouts (other exercise is fine on those days). Each session should include five to 10 different types of lifting involving the major muscle groups. For optimal strength gains, work your way up to doing three to four sets of each exercise, with each set comprising 10 to 15 repetitions.

## 5 Stationary Bicycling

Bicycling is another form of aerobic exercise, one that makes your heart stronger and your lungs function better. A stationary bike is ideal for people with diabetes because you can do it inside, no matter the weather, and you do not have to worry about falling or getting a flat when you are a long way from home. Bicycling improves blood flow to your legs—a great benefit for people with diabetes—and burns lots of calories to keep your weight at healthy levels.

Source: <https://www.everydayhealth.com/type-2-diabetes/living-with/great-exercises-for-people-with-diabetes/#01> (adapted)