GUIDE TWO
OF FIVE

02

HOW EXERCISE AFFECTS MY BLOOD GLUCOSE

EXTOD

EXTOD Exercise Confidence Guides

Ever done the same exercise, but found your blood glucose was completely different?

If the answer is **yes**, you're not alone. In fact, it's one of the biggest questions people living with Type 1 diabetes ask. But the good news is that there's usually a reason. And once you begin to understand those reasons, exercise becomes much less frightening. And that's what this guide is all about.

Not all exercise is the same

Different activities place different demands on your body. Some activities usually lower blood glucose. Some may increase it. Some can do both. Understanding this is one of the biggest steps towards exercising with confidence. Blood glucose effects will also depend on how much insulin you have circulating.

So why isn't it always the same?

Blood glucose is influenced by many factors all happening at the same time. Exercise is one piece of the puzzle, and everyone will see different glucose responses to it.

Monitoring your own blood glucose levels around exercise will help you understand your body's own responses. Understanding these is key for finding your strategies for exercise.

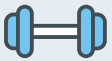
Different activities place different demands on your body.



Steady exercise

Examples: walking, cycling, jogging, swimming, gardening and housework

These activities often make your muscles use more glucose.
Your blood glucose will often fall.
That's why many people need to think about changing insulin doses or taking more carbs before longer sessions.



Short, hard exercise

Examples: sprinting, heavy weights and HIIT

These activities release stress hormones such as adrenaline.
Your blood glucose may rise during or shortly afterwards.
Don't panic if this happens. It can be a completely normal response.



Mixed exercise

Examples: football, rugby, tennis, basketball, mountain biking

These activities combine steady movement with short bursts of high intensity.

Your blood glucose may go up... down... or both.
That's perfectly normal too.

Your blood glucose is also influenced by:



Your body

- Active insulin
- Food you've eaten
- Sleep
- Illness
- Menstrual cycle phase
- Temperature
- Hydration



Your day

- Time of day
- Stress
- Previous exercise



Match days or events

- Adrenaline response

Because all these factors change from day to day, exactly the same activity can produce different results.

Food is your fuel

Food isn't just energy. It's one of the tools you can use to help manage your blood glucose before, during and after exercise.

Too little carbohydrate, and you may run out of fuel.

Too much, and your blood glucose may rise higher than you'd like.

Learning **what to eat, when to eat and how much carbohydrate you need** is an important part of exercising with confidence.

We'll explore this further in the next guides and on the EXTOD website.

Become a Diabetes Detective

Every time you exercise, ask yourself three simple questions:

- **What did I do?**
- **What happened to my blood glucose?**
- **Why do I think that happened?**

Write it down, because you'll soon begin to notice patterns. And that's how confidence grows.

Remember...

Every single person with Type 1 diabetes is different. There isn't one perfect way to exercise. The goal is to discover what works for YOU.

That's exactly what the EXTOD Guides will help you do.

Your EXTOD Guides challenge 2

Become a Diabetes Detective. Using the activity you chose in your ECG 1 Challenge, do it this week. But before you start, make a note of your blood glucose level. When you've finished, ask yourself:

- What happened?
- Why do I think that happened?

Don't worry if you don't know the answer. You're not trying to be perfect. You're simply starting to understand how your body responds to exercise, and what actually happens when you do.

Remember. The aim here is to begin noticing patterns. Because every pattern you discover helps you become more confident.

Your EXTOD Guides

- ☐ **01** Why should I exercise?
- ☐ **02** How exercise affects my blood glucose
- ☐ **03** How do I start exercising?
- ☐ **04** What is the ICE approach?
- ☐ **05** Make exercise work for you

Scan here to continue your journey

Visit the EXTOD website to explore more resources and continue learning.

extod.org

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Top tips from T1s

"Don't panic if your blood glucose doesn't do what you expected. It's normal."

"The same exercise can give different results on different days. That happens to all T1s."

"Instead of asking, 'Why did I get it wrong?' Ask, 'What can I learn from this?'"

"Don't get angry or worried when your CGM starts shooting up or down. Just stay calm and remember you prepared for this."

Always have a plan and write down what you learn. Don't rely on your memory. You're becoming a pro T1!

Always talk to your healthcare team, but don't be afraid to experiment. Just change one thing at a time.

Your next step: Guide 3 – How do I start exercising?

Now you know that different types of exercise affect blood glucose in different ways. But where do you begin? How do you exercise safely, and what should you check before you start? And just how much exercise is enough?

Guide 3 answers these questions and will help you take your first confident steps.