



**DOWN LISBURN TRUST**

DEPARTMENT OF NUTRITION &  
DIETETICS

**DIABETES  
&  
EXERCISE**

Produced by the Dietitians in Down Lisburn Trust.

2000

Everyone should exercise more to promote good health and that includes people with diabetes.

Taking regular exercise will help you to:-

- ◆ Control blood sugar levels
- ◆ Improve your circulation
- ◆ Become fitter
- ◆ Feel good

Exercise lowers blood sugar levels and this can occur quite quickly during strenuous activity. It is important to take extra carbohydrate before exercise e.g. bread, potato, fruit to compensate for this or adjust your insulin (speak to the Diabetic Nurse or Doctor about this).

For prolonged exercise such as football, hockey you may need to take some “top-up” carbohydrate at half time.

Even after you have finished exercising the body continues to use blood glucose at a faster rate. This means you may begin to experience the symptoms of a hypo some time after exercise. To prevent this, take a small snack immediately after strenuous, prolonged activity or a meal if one is due.

**When exercising remember a few simple rules:-**

- ◆ Start gently and build up gradually to a level that suits you.
- ◆ Choose something that you enjoy.
- ◆ Always carry glucose tablets when taking exercise.
- ◆ Tell friends or a coach the signs and treatment of a hypo.

**REMEMBER** to check with your doctor if planning to take up a new form of exercise, especially if you have not been active for a while.