

INSULIN PUMPS AND EXERCISE

If you wear an insulin pump, you may be able to avoid eating extra carbohydrates to prevent hypoglycemia with exercise. See below for suggestions on how to adjust your insulin pump settings.

Step 1:

Assess how long you plan to exercise. This will determine the duration to set your temporary basal feature.

Step 2:

Assess the intensity level of exercise. This will determine the amount you will need to decrease your basal rate.

Step 3:

Go to your temporary basal feature on your pump.

Step 4:

Select the percent amount you want to decrease your basal rate. For example, if you are planning to do some strenuous exercise (running), you may want to decrease by 50%. If you are going to do some light-moderate exercise (walking) you may want to decrease by 25%, or consider starting the temporary basal feature after the exercise is complete. These are starting guidelines and talk to your diabetes provider about your specific exercise goals and needs.

Step 5:

Select the duration. It is generally recommended to start the temporary basal feature 30 minutes to 1 hour prior to exercise and stop 1-2 hours after exercise. For example: If you plan to go for a jog for 30 minutes at 2 pm, you would set your duration starting at 1:30 pm for 90-120 minutes. Your normal basal rate will resume automatically once the duration set is complete. However, this duration is only suggestive and you can use the method that works best for your body.

Things to Consider:

- Exercise does cause an initial rise in glucose due to muscle and liver release of stored glucose into the blood stream to be used for energy. Be aware of your starting glucose to determine if a temporary basal is necessary.
- Most hypoglycemia occur between 30 minutes to 2 hours after exercise; however, some people with diabetes may have hypoglycemia during exercise or several hours after finishing exercise. It may take some trial and error to determine the temporary basal duration that works best for you.
- Longer and/or higher intensity of exercise increases risk for hypoglycemia.
- Continuous glucose monitoring is an excellent way to help you monitor glucose levels during exercise and make decision on temporary adjustments of your insulin pump settings.