



Week 1: The First Step... or rather, Steps!

How Walking Changes Your Blood Sugar

Managing your blood sugar is important whether or not you have diabetes.

As we age our bodies find it harder to manage glucose (blood sugar).

You may have heard the term 'pre-diabetes' which means that your blood sugar is higher than normal and your risk of developing type 2 diabetes is increased.

The good news? Physical activity helps your muscles use glucose and can support healthier blood-sugar levels.



The Science: How it Works

When you eat, your blood sugar rises.

Insulin (a hormone produced by your pancreas) acts like a key, opening your cells to let the sugar in for energy.

In prediabetes, the body's cells do not respond to insulin as effectively.

When you walk, your muscles use more glucose, which can help your body manage the rise in blood sugar after a meal. When you walk, your large leg muscles demand energy. They can actually pull sugar out of your bloodstream without needing extra insulin.



The '10-Minute Rule'

Research shows that a short walk immediately after a meal is one of the most effective ways to blunt a 'glucose spike':

- **The Goal:** Aim for a 10-minute walk within 30 minutes of finishing lunch or dinner.
- **The Result:** This can help reduce the rise in blood sugar after eating.

If 10 minutes feels too much, begin with 3 to 5 minutes at a comfortable pace and build up gradually.



Why Walking is Medicine

Walking provides three major benefits for your body:

- 1. Improved Insulin Sensitivity:** Your body's natural 'keys' start working better again
- 2. Weight Management:** Walking helps reduce fat that gathers around the organs, which is associated with an increased risk of type 2 diabetes.
- 3. Heart Protection:** Regular walking can support your heart, circulation and blood pressure.



Action

Your Week 1 Action Plan

Post-meal stroll.

- **Monday – Wednesday:** Try one 10-minute walk after your largest meal of the day.
- **Thursday – Sunday:** Try two 10-minute walks (after lunch and dinner).

