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10 Reasons Why Adults With Diabetes Should Exercise

1. To increase bone density and prevent osteoporosis. As we live longer, osteoporosis is becoming one of the major health problems associated with old age. It affects some 20 million women and 5 million men and leads to more than 250,000 hip fractures each year. Exercise delays the onset of osteoporosis by increasing bone strength.
2. To improve self-sufficiency and maintain independence. One of the top concerns of the elderly is of becoming dependent on someone. Exercise helps older adults maintain a greater capacity to undertake the activities of daily living.
3. To increase metabolism. Strength training increases muscle mass, which elevates metabolism. This may also lead to a reduction in overall body fat percentage.
4. To maintain balance and improve reflexes to decrease falls. As adults age, there is a natural decline in balance and coordination, which can be postponed and even prevented with proper strength and balance training.
5. To create a sense of community or feeling of belonging. Exercise groups enhance social interactions for many older adults who might not otherwise leave home. New friendships are also formed during group exercise.
6. To improve lung function. Lung function declines with age due to the degeneration of the vertebral disks, which alters the shape of the thoracic cavity. Physical activity, which decreases vertebral degeneration and increases the strength of the thoracic cavity, may lead to improved lung function.
7. To boost mood. Exercise reduces the incidence of depression while providing a feeling of accomplishment.
8. To help prevent and regulate diabetes. Aerobic exercise has shown to be an important means of preventing and treating non-insulin-dependent diabetes by helping regulate blood glucose.
9. To improve flexibility, joint range of motion and functional movement. Physical activities that require the body to go through the full range of movement helps keep the body flexible and mobile. Circulation is also increased.
10. To improve cardiovascular strength. Cardiovascular exercise helps maintain a healthy heart and cardiovascular system, reducing the risk of heart disease. Appropriate physical training can improve most aspects of cardiovascular functioning.

(Source: The American Council on Exercise)

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