

5 Key Exercises for People with Diabetes

Exercise 1: Crunches with waist worker

Exercise 2: Chair sit-ups OR Low back strengthener

Exercise 3: Modified push-ups

Exercise 4: Squats OR Suitcase lifts

Exercise 5: Sit-to-Stand exercise

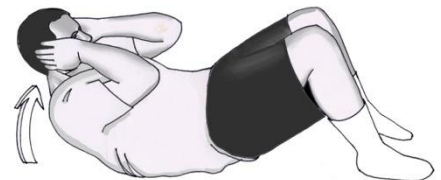
#1: Crunches with waist worker

Main muscles worked: abdominals

Crunches:

Directions:

- Lie down on your back with your knees bent.
- Place your hands on your head right behind your ears.
- While breathing out, contract your abdominal muscles to lift your head, neck, and shoulders off the floor and curl forward no more than 45 degrees.
- Hold for a moment before returning to the starting position, then repeat.



Waist worker:

Directions:

- Lie on your back on the mat with your legs bent, your feet flat on the floor, and your left hand behind your head.
- Stretch your right hand across your body toward your opposite (left) knee and circle your hand three times around your knee in a counterclockwise direction; your right shoulder blade will lift off the mat.
- Repeat the circular movement around the right knee using your left arm but in a clockwise motion.
- Keep your head in a neutral position and relax your neck to ensure that the contraction is in your abdomen area only.



#2: Chair sit-ups OR Low back strengthener

Chair sit-ups:

Main muscles worked: lower back

Directions:

- Sit up straight in a chair with your feet on the floor, hands to your sides for support.
- Bend forward, keeping your lower back as straight as possible, moving your chest down toward your thighs.
- Slowly straighten back up, using your lower back muscles to raise your torso.
- For added resistance, put a resistance band under both feet before you start and hold one end in each hand during the movement.



OR

Low back strengthener (Superman exercise):

Main muscles worked: lower back, gluteals

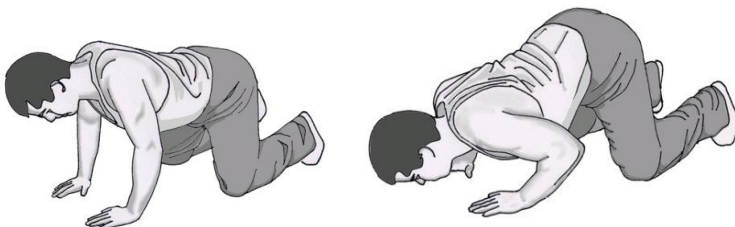
Directions:

- Lie on your stomach with your arms straight over your head, your chin resting on the floor between your arms.
- Keeping your arms and legs straight, simultaneously lift your feet and your hands as high off the floor as you can (aim for at least three inches off the floor).
- Hold that position (sort of a Superman flying position) for 10 seconds if possible, and then relax your arms and legs back onto the floor.
- If this exercise is too challenging to start, try lifting just your legs or arms off the floor separately--or even just one limb at a time.



#3: Modified push-ups

Main muscles worked: pectoralis, deltoids (anterior portion), triceps (back of arm)



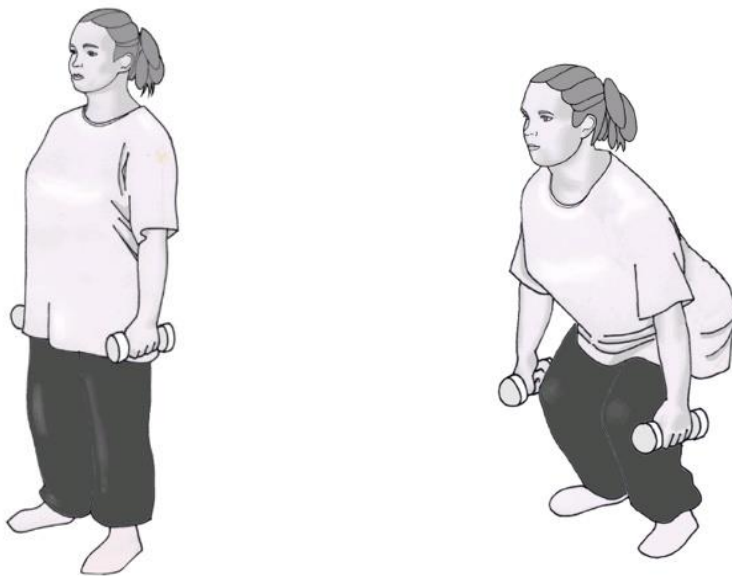
Directions:

- Get on your hands and knees on the floor or mat.
- If using a band for extra resistance, position it across your back and hold one end of it in each hand so that it is somewhat tight when your elbows are straight.
- Place your hands shoulder-width apart on the mat.
- Tighten your abdominal muscles to straighten your lower back and lower yourself (from your knees, not your feet) down toward the mat as far as you can without touching it.
- Push yourself back up until your arms are extended, but without locking your elbows.
- If this exercise is too hard, stand facing a wall and place your arms on it at shoulder height and your feet about a foot away; then, do your push-ups off the wall (with or without a resistance band).

#4: Squats OR Suitcase lifts

Squats:

Main muscles worked: quadriceps, hamstrings, gluteals, calves



Directions:

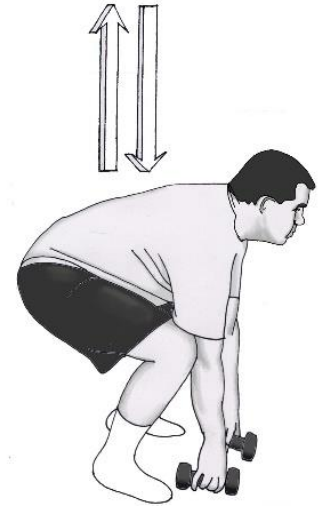
- Stand with a dumbbell (or household item, like water bottles) in each hand and your feet shoulder-width apart, with your toes pointing slightly out to the side.
- If you're using a resistance band, tie both ends of your band onto a straight bar or broom handle, which is placed squarely across your shoulders with the loop of the tied band placed under your feet.
- Keep your body weight over the back portion of your foot rather than your toes; if needed, lift your arms out in front of you to shoulder height to balance yourself.
- Begin squatting down but stop before your thighs are parallel to the floor (at about a 70-degree bend), keeping your back flat and your abdominal muscles firm at all times.
- Hold that position for a few seconds before pushing up from your legs until your body is upright in the starting position.
- Do squats with your back against a smooth wall if needed to maintain your balance.

OR Suitcase lift:

Main muscles worked: lower back, quadriceps, hamstrings, gluteals, calves

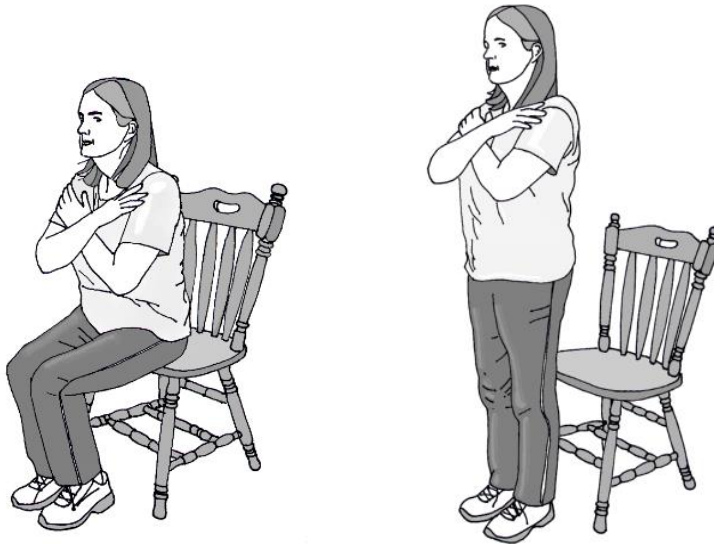
Directions:

- After placing dumbbells (or household items) slightly forward and between your feet on the floor, stand in an upright position with your back straight.
- Keep your arms straight, with your hands in front of your abdomen.
- With your back straight, bend only your knees and reach down to pick up the dumbbells.
- Pick up the dumbbells or items in both hands, then push up with your legs and stand upright, keeping your back straight.



#5: Sit-to-Stand exercise

Main muscles worked: abdomen, thighs



Directions:

- Sit toward the front of a sturdy chair and fold your arms across your chest.
- Keep your back and shoulders straight while you lean forward slightly and practice using only your legs to stand up slowly and to sit back down.
- To assist you initially, place pillows on the chair behind your low back.