

# Surprise!

## Getting your blood sugar in line can be fun!

Believe it or not, some activities you might find entertaining, relaxing and downright fun can help improve your blood sugar levels. Read on for the proof!



### Watch a comedy!

Cue up a sitcom for streaming after dinner, listen to a humorous podcast or call your funniest friend. Studies show getting in a good chuckle after eating can help reduce post-meal blood sugar spikes. Bursts of laughter provide a mini-cardio workout and trigger the release of feel-good endorphins, which may explain the blood sugar benefit. Nothing tickling your funny bone? Try going through the motions: Smile, chuckle or force a giggle, and it could lead to a genuine guffaw, say experts!

### Cuddle with Fido or Fluffy.

That warm and fuzzy feeling you get when cozing up with your pet? It comes from the flood of oxytocin (the bonding hormone) that courses through your system after a good cuddle. But oxytocin doesn't only make you feel loved: A study in the online journal *PLoS One* found it can also improve the body's response to insulin, which leads to better blood sugar control.



### Dance like a star!

Crank up some music—disco, hip-hop, swing...whatever moves you!—and practice your fancy (or not!) footwork. Just five or 10 minutes will do, and give it all you've got! Not only can dancing boost insulin sensitivity and help lower blood sugar, but it can also strengthen muscles and improve bone health. That's key since people with diabetes are at higher risk for osteoporosis and for fractures of the hip, foot and spine.



### Reconnect with your significant other

A great way to do that? Take a 10-minute stroll after dinner. Studies show that walking side by side and synchronizing your movements helps people feel connected and collaborative, a great way to feel closer and find solutions to problems. And your blood sugar will improve too: A recent study in *Diabetologia* says a 10-minute walk after dinner can lower postprandial spikes by as much as 22%! And other studies say the practice can even reduce the need for insulin!

### Take a nice warm bath

Unwind by taking a long, hot soak and not only can you mend frayed nerves but also reap an unexpected benefit: lower blood sugar levels! When researchers at England's Loughborough University compared blood sugar levels of people with type 2 diabetes after soaking in a tub for an hour and after cycling for an hour, they found that the bath lowered blood sugar 10% more than the bike ride! The scientists were surprised by the result but say it may be due to the release of proteins during bathing that help insulin do its job better. 