

10-Minutes Post-Meal walk could be the key to better Diabetes Management, says RAK Hospital expert
Dr. Shahdan Kotb

It doesn't take hours in the gym or complicated fitness plans to change the course of diabetes. Sometimes, something as simple as a 10-minute walk after meals can set the foundation for better blood sugar control, improved cardiovascular health, and even remission in some cases of type 2 diabetes.

This was the powerful message shared by Dr. Shahdan Kotb, Specialist Physiatrist at RAK Hospital, during the latest session of the RAK Diabetes Challenge's "Diabeat" webinar series, which focused on the crucial role of exercise in managing diabetes effectively.

"Exercise is more than just a lifestyle choice for people living with diabetes, it's a potent tool for better management and better health," explained Dr. Kotb. "It can improve blood glucose control, lower cardiovascular risks, support weight loss, and enhance overall quality of life."

Dr. Kotb emphasized that regular physical activity directly lowers blood sugar levels, increases insulin sensitivity, and helps reduce glycated hemoglobin (HbA1c) — a key marker of long-term blood sugar control. Beyond glucose management, exercise also supports heart health by reducing the risk of heart failure and stroke, aids in sustainable weight loss (which can even lead to disease remission in type 2 diabetes), boosts energy, improves sleep, and reduces stress.

Importantly, exercise acts as a protective shield against common musculoskeletal complications in diabetes, such as frozen shoulder, stiff hand syndrome, trigger finger, heel pain, muscle wasting, and osteoporosis — conditions that often affect mobility and quality of life.

Rather than prescribing intense regimens, Dr. Kotb encouraged participants to adopt a balanced mix of four types of exercises — aerobic activities like walking or swimming, resistance training with weights, flexibility exercises such as yoga, and balance-focused practices like tai chi. The optimum goal is 150 minutes of light to moderate aerobic activity weekly, ideally spread across five days, combined with two to three strength sessions for maximum benefit.

She also reminded patients that exercise doesn't have to be daunting. "Start small, start smart, and stay consistent," she advised. A simple daily walk can have a meaningful impact, provided it is maintained over time.

Dr. Kotb offered practical safety tips for exercising with diabetes — staying well hydrated, wearing comfortable shoes, checking feet for blisters, keeping a sugar source handy in case of hypoglycemia, and listening to one's body to avoid complications. She stressed the importance of sustainability: choosing enjoyable routines, working out with partners, tracking progress, and integrating activity into daily life, such as taking the stairs or walking short distances.

The RAK Diabetes Challenge continues to empower participants through its Diabeat webinar series, which features experts across specialties offering evidence-based insights on how lifestyle modifications, medical support, and community engagement can help individuals take control of their health.

For more information, visit www.rakdiabeteschallenge.com

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