

5 Strength Training Exercises To Help Combat Diabetes

by Mirabai Holland, MFA



We all need to eat and digest food to survive.

Our metabolic systems turn the food we eat into glucose, a sugar, that's carried by the blood to the cells of the body, where it's used for fuel, or stored for later.

But our blood should only contain a certain amount of glucose at any given time.

Too much or too little can be life threatening.

An area in the pancreas has the job of making and releasing insulin, a hormone that keeps our blood glucose at a proper level. Insulin moves glucose out of the blood and into the muscles and other cells for use or storage.

Diabetes is a disease that creates an inability to regulate blood glucose. People with Diabetes either make no insulin, not enough insulin, or their bodies don't react to the insulin they do make (insulin resistance).

18 million Americans have been diagnosed with Diabetes. Another 7 million of us are walking around undiagnosed. And a whopping 79 million are pre-diabetics, likely to develop diabetes. According to the Centers For Disease Control, one in three Americans will have Diabetes by 2050.

It's easy to see why blood glucose control is so important

Medication including insulin injections can help diabetics regulate blood glucose.

But studies show that weight training can have a similar effect.

For a few hours after weight training, muscle cells are more sensitive to insulin, making glucose uptake easier.

Weight training also increases muscle mass providing more muscle cells to receive and store glucose from the blood.

Insulin dependent diabetics often find they need to take less insulin, and many non-insulin dependent diabetics use weight training as part of lifestyle diabetes management.

It also decreases body fat by raising the metabolism; and it can help prevent pre-diabetics from developing diabetes.

Compound exercises, those that use more than one muscle group at a time, are particularly effective. The more muscles you exercise, the more areas of your body you're sensitizing for glucose uptake. You're also creating more new muscle tissue for storage.

Here are 5 compound exercises that use all the major muscle groups.

It's important to note that not all exercises are appropriate for everyone.

Be sure to consult your doctor before you begin.

When you do get started, pick a weight for each exercise that allows you to barely finish the last rep.

Start slowly and build up to strength training 3 times a week, with a day in between each session.

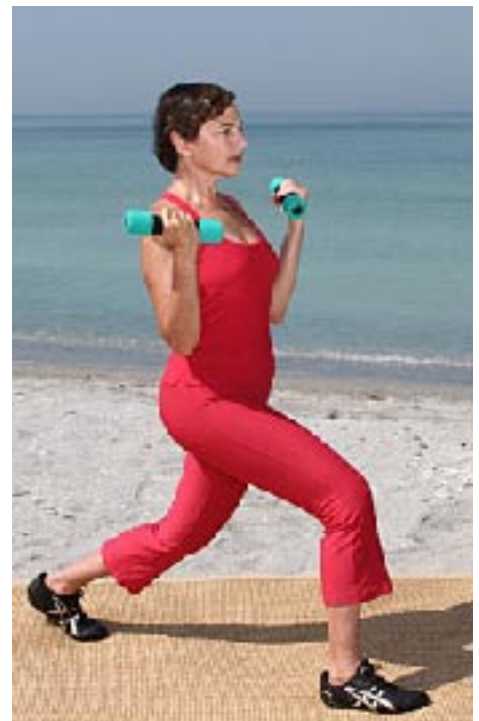
Lunge with Bicep Curls:

Front and Back Thighs, Buttocks, Calves, and Front Upper Arms.

Stand with feet together and weights by your sides. Lunge forward with right foot; bending both knees to help facilitate the move. (left heel comes off the floor) At the same time, keeping elbows at your waist, bring fists up to shoulders.

(Your front knee should be aligned behind the second toe of that foot and your weight is centered between your front and back foot.)

Hold for 4 seconds, (remember to breathe out) return to starting position and repeat lunging with left foot.





Lateral Raise With Plie:

Shoulders, Outer and Inner Thighs

Stand in a wide second position with heels shoulder width apart, feet turned out and weights by your sides. Bend knees and slowly lift weights out to sides, to chest level. Then lower weights down, while straightening legs.

10-15 reps

One Arm Dumbbell Row:

Upper and Middle Back, Upper Arm, and Abs
Stand with left foot forward, right foot back, knees bent as though walking. With weight in right hand, bend forward, hinging from your hips, back flat, supported by your left hand on left thigh. Let your right arm with weight hang down toward the floor.

In one smooth motion, keeping abs pulled in, bring the weight up to your hip.
10-15 reps. Switch sides and repeat.





Modified Bicycle

Crunch: Abs and Obliques

Lie on your back knees bent, feet on the floor, hands behind your head, elbow pointing outward.

In one motion, bring your torso up, elbow pointed toward ceiling. At the same time bring your right leg up to

meet it, until your left elbow is about 8 inches from your right knee.

Return to starting position: then bring right elbow toward left knee.

Repeat the entire sequence alternating sides in a comfortable rhythmic cadence for 10 to 30 repetitions.

Chest Press:

Chest, Shoulders, and Back of Upper Arms

Lie on back with knees bent and feet on the floor. With a weight in each hand, at chest level push arms straight up toward ceiling, without locking the elbows.

10-15 reps



Mirabai Holland M.F.A. legendary fitness pioneer and public health advocate specializes in preventive and rehabilitative exercise. Her Moving Free® approach to exercise is designed to provide a movement experience so pleasant it doesn't feel like work. For more info please visit www.movingfree.com