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East Tallinn Central Hospital diabetes nurse: be physically active every day!

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According to East Tallinn Central Hospital diabetes nurse Marje Klauks, regular physical activity helps prevent various diseases. For example, it reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease by 35% and the risk of type II diabetes by as much as 50%.

Sooner or later, insufficient physical activity inevitably leads to increased weight. If your body mass index is over 35, you already have a 50% chance of developing type II diabetes. At the same time, losing approx. 5-10% of your weight reduces the risk of diabetes by 58%.

If you do have diabetes, you are 50% more likely to have a cardiovascular disease, and 75% of the time diabetes also entails hypertension. However, blood pressure decreases by 2.5/1.5 mmHg for every kilo of weight you lose.

You should move for at least 1 hour every day

Being physically active requires at least 1 hour of movement every day. Remember that your 30-minute commute to work contributes to this. It is recommended to get at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise per week or at least 75 minutes of high intensity exercise per week. Movement keeps many health risks under check and prevents weight gain.

People often blame their stressful daily lives and mundane problems for their lack of movement. Marje Klauks points out that a sedentary lifestyle is very often accompanied by the irresistible desire for frequent snacks. Increased appetite tends to lead to excess weight and health issues. It also reduces bone and muscle strength, raises cholesterol and causes depression.

Reducing overall stress levels improves health, including blood pressure, lowers heart and respiratory rate, relaxes muscles, improves metabolism, increases the body's oxygen supply, boosts confidence and ensures good sleep.

There are several easy ways to reduce stress and relax:

- perform regular physical exercise (whichever activity you prefer)
- do what you enjoy (reading, going to the cinema, dancing, etc.)
- if you feel your breath becoming shallower and faster due to stress, perform breathing exercises by breathing in and out slowly

Getting enough sleep also helps. Get 7-8 hours of sleep every day. Sleep deprivation can alter our food preferences, increase cravings for carbohydrates and high-calorie foods and increase food portions.