



If You Have Diabetes While You Are Pregnant: Relax and Lower Your Stress

STEPS TO TAKE

Your blood sugar level can go up when you are stressed. So it's a good idea to identify different ways to lower your stress.

Here Are Some Ways to Help You Relax:

Breathe deeply.

Sit comfortably and put your hand on your stomach.

- Take a deep breath. Use the muscles in your stomach, not your chest.
- Feel your stomach lift up about an inch as the air goes in
- Breathe out all the way
- Feel your stomach go down about an inch

Now, breathe this way slowly.

- Breathe in and count to six
- Breathe out and count to six
- Do this three or more times
- Practice doing this every day

Relax your muscles.

Soften the tightness in your muscles.

- Tighten up, and then relax your muscles — one at a time
- Start with your feet and work up (Flex your feet upward to keep from getting cramps in your calves)
- Remember to breathe!

Take time to imagine.

Think about a place where you like to be — a place that is quiet and restful.

- Picture it in your mind
- Think about what you might see, hear, feel, touch, or taste
- When you feel stressed, think about being in this relaxing place

Lower the stress in your life.

Pay attention to what makes you feel stressed.

- Try to make changes in your life to avoid that stress
- Try doing the things on this sheet
- Figure out what works best for you

Take time for yourself.

- Call a friend
- Read a book, watch a movie, or listen to music
- Relax in a warm bath
- Do crafts or a favorite hobby
- Rest for half an hour or more in the middle of the day
- Take a few moments to sit in silence and think peaceful thoughts

Get the exercise you need.

Ask your health care provider about what exercises you can do safely. For example:

- Go for a walk
- Go swimming
- Join a pregnancy exercise class

Get some support.

All of us need someone who will listen to us.

- Find a good friend, co-worker, or relative you can talk to
- Talk with them about what it is like to have diabetes
- Talk to your health care team about any problems you may have

Cut down on what you do.

Find ways to let others help you at home and at work. It's okay to ask for help. Maybe they can:

- Do the dishes or the laundry
- Shop for you
- Cook a meal
- Take care of the kids

