

EXERCISE HELPS PREVENT DIABETES

Diabetes is an epidemic disease affecting the youth population. The Center of Disease Control and Prevention warns unless more people start eating less and exercising more, 45-50 billion U.S. residents could have diabetes by 2050. Type 2 Diabetes (used to be called adult onset diabetes) is on the rise and is affecting young people. This does not have to happen and can be prevented by maintaining optimal weight, exercising, and eating balanced meals.

Exercise seems to be a key component in the prevention of diabetes as many youngsters diagnosed with Diabetes are overweight and are inactive. So, in this day in age, where video and computer games are all the rage, and kids are less inclined to “go outside and play”, how do we get the kids interested in fitness? Living in Maine during the winters does not seem to help, when all of us just want to stay inside and ride out the cold snap.

The first step is to figure out the interests of the whole family, and then decide which activities are convenience and financially feasible. Here are some interesting activities that might be right for your family.

Winter Fun

Some fun and motivating outdoor winter activities could include skiing, ice skating, snow shoeing, and sledding. Getting the whole family involved makes it fun instead of like exercising. Even getting out and having a snow ball fight, and making forts, snowmen, etc is good exercise.

It may seem challenging to find good indoor activities during the winter, but if you are really motivated, you can find them. Some good choices are roller skating, in-line skating, martial arts, yoga, and weight lifting. You can call your local parks and recreation or Y-program for classes and activities for some more ideas. Here is a great exercise that can be done indoors-jumping on a mini-trampoline! They don't take up very much space, store easily, and are portable. Just jumping for a few minutes increase circulation and burns calories. One activity that seems to be grabbing youth's attention is the “Dance, Dance Revolution”, a game that challenges your ability to keep up with the programmed dance moves. This is a great cardiovascular activity, and kids don't even realize that they are exercising.

Year Round Fitness

The answer to finding ways to keep your family active year round is to plan activities that the whole family enjoys. That means not relying on television or the computer to provide entertainment all of the time. Plan camping trips, bike rides, 10k walk/run, going to the park to play Frisbee or baseball, swimming, bowling, miniature golfing, etc. The list can be endless, and is limited only by your imagination. If you have always wanted to learn sailing, then sign up for lessons. The point is to make an effort to plan activities that get the family moving. The more active you can be, the more you are doing to prevent illness and disease.