



Session 19: Stay Active

To prevent or delay diabetes and improve health, keep an eye on your **physical activity goals**. Aim for a well-rounded plan that blends moderate intensity activities (like brisk walking) with strength training, sitting less and moving more.

Today, you will:

- revisit the “sit-less” activity goal and plan for a “sit-less” week
- give yourself credit for your efforts to stay active
- learn how good posture supports your physically active lifestyle
- remind yourself why you want to stay active
- discuss your biggest barriers and ways to cope with them

Sit less review

Let’s look back at the past week. Refer to your **Sit Less Tracker** if you have one.

- Please mark the times each day with a “**T**” when you were able to add at least one **TABS** (you took a short break from sitting).
- Next, mark the times each day with an “**ST**” when you added at least one **Super TABS** (you replaced your sitting with standing or moving for 10 minutes or more).

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Morning							
Afternoon							
Evening							

Look at the grid above. Is there a specific day or time of day when you are getting more of your **TABS** or **Super TABS**?

When and where could you add more **TABS** or **Super TABS**? Be specific.

GLB has encouraged you to try to sit less in several different areas of your life. Are there specific changes you have made in any of these areas?

- ☐ **Home** _____
- ☐ **Work** _____
- ☐ **Transportation** _____
- ☐ **Out and about** (socially, on your own) _____

When you reflect on all your efforts to sit less, what is working best for you? What are some of the challenges?

Give yourself credit for any “double bonuses” (swapping sitting activities with moving more). What sit less/move more changes are you most proud of?

Good work. Keep going. Keep moving.



Plan for a “Sit Less” Week

“A goal without a plan is just a wish”

-Antoine de Saint-Exupery, French writer

You can find the time to sit less.

- Find blocks of time where you can add more **TABS** (brief breaks from sitting) or **Super TABS** (replacing sitting for at least 10-minutes at a time)
- Make your plan in the table below. Be specific.

	What I Will Do	When	Where
Mon			
Tues			
Wed			
Thurs			
Fri			
Sat			
Sun			

Don't just wait for the sitting breaks to happen.

You need to make them happen. Have a clear plan for when and where you will add **TABS** and **Super TABS** in your week.

What are some things that could make it hard to carry out this plan?

To overcome these challenges, I will:

Remember to give yourself credit. Record your **TABS** and **Super TABS** so you can see your progress.



Good Posture Supports Your Physically Active Lifestyle

The term *posture* describes how your body is positioned when you sit, stand, or move. Let's look at why proper posture is so important as you move forward with your physically active lifestyle.

Good Posture

- Supports healthy physical movement and may prevent injury.
- Helps your body function more efficiently.
- Projects poise, confidence, and dignity.
- Improves appearance.

Bad Posture

- Can cause some muscles to work harder than others. This creates a muscle imbalance.
- Because some muscles are working harder than they should, you may feel fatigued.
- Slouching bends the back, can limit lung movement, and hinder breathing.
- May cause muscles or joints to become stiff and sore.

Your goal is to stay active over the long term. Healthy posture will help you stay more active.

Strong, flexible muscles are the key to good posture.

- Strong abdominal (core/belly) muscles support your back.
- Weak or tight hip or leg muscles can pull on your back. Example: "tight hamstrings" (the muscles on the back of your thigh) can lead to poor posture and back pain.

Healthy, functioning joints are the key to fluid movement.

- Hip, knee, and ankle joints support your back's natural curves when you are moving.
- Allow you to have good posture for standing and moving.

Good Posture, Good Movement

When you set out to do any physical activity (spontaneous or planned), take a moment to check your standing posture.

Keep these images in mind:

Front View



Side View



Front View

- Imagine a straight line from the top of your head, through the center of your body, to your feet. This is good alignment.
- Head should be held straight with chin level. Do not tilt your head to one side.
- Both shoulders, hips, and knees should be of equal height, relative to each other.

Side View

- Imagine a straight line through your ear, shoulder, hip, knee and ankle.
- Maintain the three natural curves of your back (neck, upper back, and lower back).



Good Sitting Posture

Good sitting posture may reduce strain on your muscles, tendons, and bones.

- Head is held erect (no slouching or leaning forward).
- Maintain the three natural curves of the back (neck, upper back, and lower back).

Guidelines for Proper Sitting Position at Your Desk

- Use a chair with good back support and position yourself close to your desk/keyboard.
- Keep your feet flat on the floor. If they do not reach the floor, use a footrest.
- Knees and hips should be bent at a 90-degree angle.
- Keep your wrists in line with your arms – not angled up or down.
- Keep your head and neck straight and facing forward. Computer monitor should be at eye level.
- Keep your elbows at your side with your forearms parallel to the floor.





Take a Break from Sitting

Despite your best efforts, some days you have to sit at a desk for a long time. This prolonged sitting can cause stiffness and pain, and be hazardous to your muscles and joints.

Here are some quick and easy tips to help ease the strain on your muscles and joints.

- Set a timer that cues you to stand up or move each 30 minutes.
- Shift positions in your chair often.
- Make small adjustments to your chair.
- Stand up, march in place, stretch out your arms.
- Walk up and down your hallway for 100 steps.
- Try a standing desk or a keyboard that moves up and down.
- Try some of the desk stretches below.

Desk Stretches

1. Hand – Open and Fist



- Separate and straighten your fingers until you feel a stretch.
- Hold 10 seconds.
- Make a fist – squeeze tight.
- Hold 10 seconds.

2. Neck – Head Tilt



- Keep shoulders relaxed with arms hanging loosely at your sides.
 - Look straight ahead, tilt your head to one side (ear towards your shoulder).
 - Keep shoulders relaxed and do not raise your shoulders.
 - Hold for 5-10 seconds.
 - Relax – bring head to starting position.
 - Repeat on the other side.
-

3. Shoulder Shrug



- Raise your shoulders up to your ears until you feel slight tension in your neck and shoulders.
 - Hold for 5-10 seconds.
 - Relax and let your shoulders drop into their resting position.
 - Repeat 3-5 times.
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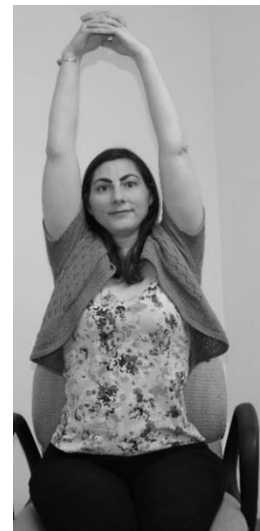
4. Arms, Shoulders and Upper Back

- Interlace your fingers.
- Straighten your arms out **in front** of you. (You can also turn palms outward).
- Feel the stretch in your arms and the upper part of your back.
- Hold for 10-20 seconds, repeat 2-3 times.



5. Arms, Shoulders, and Sides of Trunk

- Interlace your fingers. Straighten your arms **overhead**. (You can also turn palms outward).
- Think of elongating your arms.
- Feel the stretch in your arms and upper sides of your rib cage.
- Hold for 10-20 seconds, repeat 2-3 times.



6. Upper back

- Interlace your fingers behind your head with elbows out to the side.
- Pull shoulder blades back toward each other.
- Hold for 5-10 seconds.
- Repeat 2-3 times.





Why Do I Want to Stay Active?

Reasons to stay active

Let's pause for a moment to focus on why you choose to stay active.

The top three reasons I stay active (even when it feels hard):

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Barriers and ways to cope with them

Most people face daily challenges that move their activity plans to the back burner. Things that get in the way of your plans to exercise are called exercise barriers.

People who stay active find ways to overcome these barriers.

What keeps you from exercising?

My biggest activity barriers/challenges	Not-so-healthy responses	Healthier responses

Social support

Having social support has been shown to help people overcome barriers to physical activity.

Who supports your efforts to stay active? _____

What do they say or do to support you? _____

How can you get more of the support you need? _____



To Do:

Check the boxes when you complete each item:

The Basics:

- ☐ Keep track of your weight.
- ☐ Record what you eat and drink using your preferred method. Come as close as you can to your calorie and fat gram goals.
- ☐ Record your physical activity using your preferred method. Come as close as you can to your activity goals.
 - Be physically active for at least 150 minutes per week.
 - Aim for an average of at least 50,000 steps per week.
 - Include resistance training at least 2 times per week.
- ☐ Sit less. Be aware of long periods of sitting and break them up. Keep moving throughout the day.

What's New:

- ☐ Break up your sitting with **TABS** and **Super TABS**.
- ☐ Use the "**Sit Less**" Tracker (pages 14-15) and give yourself credit for **TABS** and **Super TABS**.
- ☐ Maintain good posture as part of your physically active lifestyle.
- ☐ Try quick tips to ease your muscles and joints when you get stuck sitting for long periods. Practice desk stretches (pages 7-9).
- ☐ Remind yourself often of the top three reasons you choose to stay active.
- ☐ Be aware of your barriers to physical activity and ways to cope with them.
- ☐ Find the support you need to stay active.

Session 19: Resources

Page

Healthy Back Posture Helps You Stay Active

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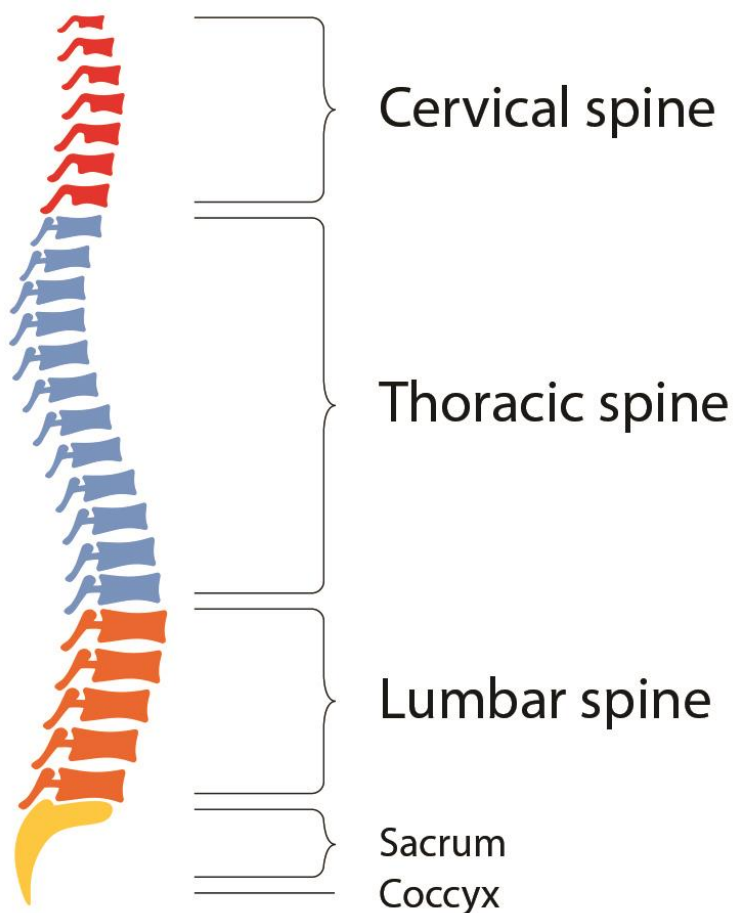
Group Lifestyle Balance™ - "Sit Less" Tracker

14-15

Healthy Back Posture Helps You Stay Active

A healthy back has three natural curves in balanced alignment.

- Cervical curve – slight forward curve of the neck
- Thoracic curve – a slight backward curve of the upper back
- Lumbar curve – a slight forward curve of the low back



Good posture supports healthy physical movement and may prevent injury.

Group Lifestyle Balance™ – “Sit Less” Tracker

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