



Spring cleaning tips for people with diabetes

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May 2025

Spring cleaning is a bit of a mixed bag for most Americans. On the one hand, it is hard work – a recent study showed that [25% of us](#) think cleaning is more difficult than our full-time jobs, and so we avoid it unless guests are coming over. On the other, cleaning out the cobwebs, literally and figuratively, can signify a new beginning as spring approaches. Following are a few pointers that can benefit your home, your family and your diabetes management.

Start with the medicine cabinet

Spring is a great time to ensure that you have the medications you need and that they are unexpired – this includes non-diabetes medications for heart disease, high blood pressure and the like. (Since some medications can't simply be thrown away in the garbage, check the [Food and Drug Administration website](#) in order to find out the best way to dispose of expired medications.)

Also, inventory your diabetes supplies, which should be kept clean and in ready-to-use condition. They should be accessible in case of an emergency.

These supplies can include:

- Blood glucose meter
- Insulin pump
- Insulin pump supplies, which include extra pump sets and insertion devices
- Extra batteries for the pump and meter
- Keytone strips
- Alcohol wipes
- Glucose tablets
- An empty container for carrying syringes, needles and lancets



Spring cleaning is a great way to exercise

Spring cleaning may be, well, a chore, but guess what – chores burn calories.

The American Heart Association recommends that people, especially those with heart disease or diabetes, [get 150 minutes of exercise a week](#) – and it doesn't matter how you get it. Studies show that loading a washing machine burns 41 calories, light sweeping or dusting 47, and doing a variety of household tasks at once, 87.

One way to burn those calories is to declutter. Most neuroscientists believe that the presence of clutter can cause [cognitive overload](#), meaning that the brain has to struggle to prioritize attention in a messy household. This can lead to increased levels of cortisol, the hormone associated with stress, which in turn can increase blood glucose levels.

3 tips to keep your living space organized

- 1 Have a Goal.** Start out in one room or with one particularly messy desk or drawer or closet. Have a container for recycling, one for giving away old clothing and another for anything that needs to go in the trash.
- 2 Do not do more than you had planned.** This tip may sound counterintuitive. If you promised yourself you'd clear out that spare bedroom and now you have accomplished that goal with time to spare, why not take on another task? The reason is that your body and mind were expecting rest as a reward for their task – and now you are double-crossing them. This can lead to feeling overwhelmed and to future procrastination. **Take a break. You've earned it. Tomorrow is another day.**
- 3 Dusting is Important.** Be careful how you do it. [Many Americans spend as much as 90% of their time indoors](#), without quite realizing how much the animal dander, dust mites and pollen in the air affects their lungs. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), [people with diabetes are at high risk for exposure to harmful indoor particles](#), which can inhibit the ability of their blood vessels to control blood flow. So dust (especially bedrooms), while wearing a mask and using a damp mop or damp cloth in order to keep down the dust stirred up while cleaning. While doing so, if possible, keep an air purifier running.

DID YOU KNOW?

The “island” that saved millions

In 1910, [Sir Edward Albert Sharpey-Schafer](#) discovered that diabetes resulted from a lack of the chemical regulating blood sugar, which originates in the islets of Langerhans region of the pancreas. He named that chemical insulin, from the Latin “insula,” meaning island. In 1922, 14-year-old Leonard Thompson, a charity patient at the Toronto General Hospital, became the first person to receive an injection of insulin to treat diabetes.

Sources: <https://nypost.com/2024/12/24/lifestyle/nearly-1-in-4-americans-say-keeping-home-clean-is-harder-than-full-time-job-survey/> | https://www.advidiabetes.com/articles/spring-cleaning-tips-part-one?srsltid=AfmBOooJXsBojgaITRngeJnE_kXbsZoiHSE3lBq5addvMgSfsPLKfqBS&utm_source=chatgpt.com | https://www.heart.org/en/news/2024/03/27/for-healthy-spring-cleaning-think-neat-and-dust-carefully?utm_source=chatgpt.com | <https://www.fda.gov/consumers/womens-health-topics/spring-cleaning-tips> | <https://stacks.cdc.gov/view/cdc/77063> | <https://neurosciencenews.com/anxiety-stress-messy-home-23874/> | https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2015-08/documents/deh_english_100-f-07-020.pdf | <https://www.news-medical.net/health/History-of-Diabetes.aspx>

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The Kitchen

The kitchen, as the epicenter of most homes, often needs special attention during spring cleaning. For many people, not just those with diabetes, winter is a time of comfort food, which can mean that your cupboards and refrigerator may contain high-fat or high-carb impulse buys from the depths of January. So:

Clean out the refrigerator of expired containers of food or condiments. Once you've got a nice bare refrigerator, fill it with diabetes-friendly foods: fruit, low-fat yogurt and cheeses, fibrous vegetables and plenty of lean protein like salmon or chicken for the freezer,

Next, the cupboards will almost certainly need attention. Examine boxes and cans for expiration dates. Check out nut butters to make sure they have not gone rancid (which can happen if they are poorly closed). Then, as with your refrigerator, stock up on plain, non-sugar cereals, brown rice, quinoa and other sources of healthy fiber. (Air-popped popcorn makes a great snack.) Finally, inspect your spices. Over time, they can lose their flavor and potency.

