

FOOTCARE TIPS (continued...)

- Wear clean dry socks that are not too tight and lightly colored, change daily or when they become wet;
- Avoid crossing legs for long periods of time;
- Exercise is good for poor circulation. It stimulates blood flow in the legs and feet. However, avoid walking when you have open sores on your feet.

Remember, controlling your blood sugar and caring for your feet every day are the best steps you can take to prevent serious diabetic foot problems.



WHEN SHOULD I SEE MY HEALTH CARE PROVIDER ABOUT DIABETIC FOOT PROBLEMS?

Serious foot problems can develop quickly. See your health care provider right away if you notice:

- A cut, blister, or bruise on your feet that doesn't start to heal in a few days.
- Red, warm, or painful skin on your feet.
- A callus with dried blood inside.
- A foot infection that becomes black and smells bad that could be gangrene.

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Diabetes Footcare Education

DIABETES FOOTCARE

Taking care of your feet when you have diabetes is an important part of your self-care regimen.

Diabetic nerve damage can lessen your ability to feel sensations like pain, heat, and cold. This means that you may not even realize that you have a foot injury like a cut or blister until it gets infected.

Nerve damage can even cause the shape of your feet and toes to change, making regular shoes uncomfortable and possibly damaging to your feet.

Diabetes also causes blood vessels to narrow and harden, resulting in poor circulation (blood flow)—another culprit when it comes to foot complications. Poor circulation makes it more difficult for your foot to fight infection and heal.

While even small cuts and ulcers can lead to more serious infections that result in loss of a limb, there are things you can do to protect your feet.

FOOTCARE TIPS

Follow these tips to help prevent injury and reduce the risk of developing foot problems that can occur when you're living with diabetes and neuropathy.

- Check the feet everyday, looking for cuts, cracks, blisters, redness, swelling or nail issues, check between the toes and the bottom of the feet, use a hand mirror if necessary;
- Wash feet daily with mild soap and lukewarm water, avoid hot water;
- Do not soak the feet, this can lead to dry skin;
- Dry the feet well, including between the toes;
- Cut toenails carefully after washing feet, cut straight across and file sharp edges, do not cut too short this leads to ingrown toenails;

- NO PEDICURES, unless completed by a health care professional;
- Never self-treat corns, calluses or warts at home, visit your clinic/physician for support;
- Keep the feet soft and reduce dry skin by using unscented moisturizer daily, focus on the heels, soles and tops but avoid the toes as this could lead to infection;
- Never walk barefoot indoors or outdoors, use slippers;
- Choose comfortable shoes that do not rub or pinch, avoid high heels, open toes and shoes with straps and no back support;
- Shake out shoes and feel the inside before wearing;

