



A Focus On Diabetic Foot Care

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Caring for your feet is one of the many important things you can do — and need to do — if you are diabetic or if you have been told you have “poor circulation.” Diabetes, a condition having to do with your body’s production of blood sugar, often results in changes in blood supply to your feet.

Because of this you may not always feel things that are very hot or very cold. Or you may not feel it if you have hurt your toes or feet. These are the reasons why you need to take extra care of your feet if you have diabetes. As simple as this care may sound, it does mean that there is some work you must do — every day.

TAKE A LOOK

Ask yourself the following questions if you have diabetes: Do you see any red areas on your feet? Does the skin color seem different? Is the skin dry? Are there cracks in the skin? Is there a sore between the toes or on the bottom of your foot? Do you ever feel tingling in your toes? Does it sometimes feel like “needles and pins”? Or do you sometimes not even feel the tips of your toes?

You do not need to answer “yes” to any of these questions — but you do need to ask yourself these questions on a routine basis. Be sure to tell your doctor or nurse when you notice changes.

The American Diabetes Association and the National Diabetes Education Program have put together helpful tips on what you can do to stay healthy and to keep alert for foot problems.

What you can do:

- Be sure to dry your feet and between your toes when you are finished showering or bathing.
- Do not use hot water bottles or heating pads on your toes or feet. You may not feel if it is too hot or too cold.
- Wear cotton socks with shoes, and always wear shoes when you go out.
- Be sure the shoes fit. Give your toes some wiggle room.
- Have your doctor examine your feet at each visit, or at least one time per year.
- Look for **any** changes: color, skin, blotching, or the look or color of toenails.
- Keep toenails trimmed and only use a nail clipper. If you are diabetic, or if your toenails are thick and long, have this done by a foot doctor (also known as a podiatrist).
- Exercise your feet and toes.
- Put your feet **up** when you sit **down** at least a few times a day.

TO FIND OUT MORE

For more information, you can visit with the following organizations and programs online. (You can find these programs and organizations on the Internet using a search engine like Google, Microsoft or Yahoo.)

Take Care of Your Feet for a Lifetime
National Diabetes Education Program

Prevent Diabetes Problems: Keep Your Feet and Skin Healthy

NDIC: National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse

Foot Care

American Diabetes Association

