

Diabetes Foot Care

People with diabetes can get many different kinds of foot problems. Foot problems happen when there is nerve damage in the feet (**neuropathy**) or when blood flow is poor. Foot care is very important for every person with diabetes, but especially if you have:



- Loss of feeling in your feet
- Changes in the shape of your feet
- Foot ulcers or sores that do not heal

Nerve Care

Nerve damage can cause you to lose feeling in your feet. You may not feel a pebble inside your sock that is causing a sore. You may not feel a blister caused by poorly fitting shoes. Foot injuries such as these can cause ulcers, which can lead to amputation, so it is important to check your feet every day.

Check Your Feet **Every Day**

- Check feet for cuts, sores, red spots, swelling, and infected toenails or cracked toenails.
- Check for rashes, dry, cracked skin, changes in color.
- Watch for signs of infection, corns and calluses.
- Do not use any over-the-counter medications for corns, calluses or warts.
- Use a mirror if you can not see the bottom of your feet. You can also ask a family member or caregiver to help you.

Wash Your Feet Every Day

DO

- ✓ Gently wash your feet in warm, not hot, water.
- ✓ Dry your feet well with a soft towel. Dry between your toes.
- ✓ Use lotion on the tops and bottoms of your feet.
- ✓ Use talcum powder or cornstarch to keep the skin between your toes dry.

DO NOT

- ✗ Soak or scrub your feet.
- ✗ Use alcohol on your feet.
- ✗ Put lotion or cream between your toes because this may cause an infection.

Call your healthcare provider right away if a cut, sore, bruise or blister does not begin to heal after one day.

Nail Care

When you have diabetes, it is important to prevent problems with your feet.

- See your healthcare provider for regular foot care.
- See a foot doctor ([podiatrist](#)) to have your nails trimmed.
- Look at your feet every day for blisters, sores, redness or open wounds.



Do not cut corns or calluses or your toenails. Do not use razor blades, corn plasters or liquid corn remover. These can damage your skin. Ask a healthcare provider about cutting your toenails.

Choose the Right Socks

Wear socks made of natural fibers, such as cotton or wool to let skin breathe. Socks should fit well and socks without seams are best. You want to get good blood flow to your toes.



Wear Shoes and Socks at all Times

Do ✓	Do Not ✗
Always wear socks.	Walk barefoot.
Check the insides of your shoes before you put them on. You want to be sure there are no objects in them.	Wear tight socks or garters around your legs.
Put your feet up when you are sitting.	Cross your legs for long periods.
Wear socks at night if your feet get cold.	Put hot water bottles or heating pads on your feet.
Ask your doctor if you need special shoes.	Wear flip flops.

Remember: Your doctor should do a foot exam at least once a year, or more often, if you have foot problems.