

## Diabetic Foot Care Info

People with diabetes are often reminded about the importance of checking their feet. Higher than normal glucose levels in the blood can cause damage to nerves and cause decreased circulation to the limbs. Damage to the nerves of the feet and hands is called 'peripheral neuropathy'. This can leave feet and hands with a tingling or numbness, as a result less likely to feel a foot injury such as a blister or a cut. Decreased circulation to the feet "peripheral vascular disease" can affect a person's ability to heal. An injury that goes unnoticed and untreated can quickly become infected, potentially leading to serious consequences.

Prevention is the best medicine. A daily foot check routine will help keep your feet healthy.

**How to check:** Use your hands to feel and your eyes to look, thoroughly investigate:

- The tops and sides of your feet including your heel and ankle
- Your toes; on top of the toe, between the toes and under the toe, the nail and tip of the toe
- The sole of your foot. The soles of the feet may be awkward for some of us to check but it's an important part of our feet that needs to be checked every day. You may find it helps to use a mirror to help check the soles of your feet or ask a family member or care giver to assist.



## When to see a Professional

If you have any corns (thick or hard skin on toes), calluses (thick skin on bottom of feet), in-grown toenails have them treated by your Foot Care Nurse. Do not try to treat them yourself. If you have any swelling, warmth, redness or pain in your legs or feet, see your doctor right away.

People with decreased vision or problems reaching their feet should consider having their nail trimming done regularly by a Foot Care Nurse. A diabetic foot screening for neuropathy and loss of circulation should be done at least once yearly.



**CONTACT US:**

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## What are you checking for?

- cuts
- grazes
- sores
- bruises
- blisters
- burns
- missing skin
- reddened areas



## Look also for other changes such as:

- changes in colour - whitening, reddening, yellowing, darkening or paling of skin on feet
- changes in shape - either in one area or if the whole foot becomes swollen. Compare one foot to the other.
- Changes in texture - dry, rough, bumpy, rash, thickened skin, hard skin
- Any unusual changes in odour of your feet
- Skin that is warm or hot to the touch
- Cold feet, particularly if they are also paler than they should be

## Additional Foot Health Tips

- Wash your feet daily, use warm water and a mild soap. Dry well between your toes.
- Apply a good lotion to your heels and soles. Wipes off excess lotion that is not absorbed.
- Don't put lotion between your toes, as the excessive moisture can promote infection.
- Wear fresh clean socks and well-fitting shoes every day
- Do not stick things to your feet like corn pads or bandaids as they can cause irritation to the skin
- Protect your feet, no stocking feet or bare feet, even in the house.
- Whenever possible, wear white socks - if you have a cut or sore, the drainage will be easy to see
- Diabetic socks are less restrictive to lower legs and toe seams are smaller to decrease pressure on toes

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