

## Diabetic Foot Care

You have probably heard about the importance of foot care. Foot infections or ulcers are signs of vascular complications. Therefore, daily foot care is essential. You (or another person) must inspect your feet every day. Set aside a regular time to check your toes for blisters, cuts, scratches, cracks, corns, and calluses. Also examine the balls of your feet for dryness and skin cracks. Have your doctor or podiatrist routinely examine your feet on your scheduled office visits.

### DO:

Wash feet daily; always dry carefully between the toes.

Powder feet and shoes after bathing.

Use a mild lubricating lotion to protect the feet from cracking and drying. Use the lotion over the entire foot, but NOT between the toes or on the toes. For more severe peeling or cracking, use A & D ointment (available in the baby care section of your pharmacy) at night before going to bed.

Cut the toenails straight across; if your vision is poor, ask a family member to help or have your doctor or podiatrist provide the proper foot care.

Keep feet warm and dry.

Wear loose fitting socks to bed if your feet are cold.

Wear comfortable, well-fitting shoes.

Break in new shoes carefully to avoid blisters.

Inspect the inside of shoes daily for foreign objects or torn linings.

Check your feet daily for blisters, cuts, or infections.

Check your socks or stockings for drainage or unusual odors.

### DON'T:

Don't smoke or use tobacco in any form. Nicotine reduces the blood circulation.

Don't walk barefoot outside.

Don't use hot foot soaks, heating pads, or hot-water bottles on your feet or legs.

Don't keep feet too moist or too dry.

Avoid exposure of the feet to extremes of hot and cold.

Don't use chemicals or corn plasters to remove corns and calluses.

Don't use adhesive tape on the skin.

Don't use perfumed lotions.

Avoid open-toed shoes, particularly sandals with thongs between the toes.

Don't wear socks with holes in them.

Don't walk on an injured foot.

Remember, contact your doctor or podiatrist if you have athlete's foot, an ingrown toenail, cuts, sores, discoloration, or pain in your feet or calves.

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