

# Diabetic Foot Care Guidelines



Foot problems are a common complication for people with diabetes. Fortunately, most of these complications can be prevented with careful foot care. Most people can prevent any serious problem by following some simple steps for daily care of their feet.

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## DAILY CARE

- Inspect your feet daily. Check for cuts, blisters, redness, and swelling or nail problems. Use a magnifying hand mirror to look at the bottom of your feet. Call your doctor if you notice any problem.
- Keep your feet clean by washing them daily. Wash your feet in lukewarm water not “hot” water. Be gentle when bathing your feet. Wash them using a soft washcloth or sponge. Dry by blotting or patting and carefully dry between the toes.
- Moisturize your feet — but not between the toes— that could cause a fungal infection. Using a moisturizer daily will keep dry skin from itching or cracking.
- Wear clean, dry socks. Change them daily. Avoid the wrong type of socks such as ones with tight elastic bands which will reduce circulation. Do not wear thick or bulky socks which can fit poorly and irritate the skin.
- If your feet get cold at night, wear socks to bed. NEVER use a heating pad or hot water bottle.



## FOOT AND SHOE CARE

- Always keep your feet warm and dry. Don't let your feet get wet in snow or rain.
- Never walk barefoot, not even at home. Always wear shoes or slippers. You could step on something and get a scratch or cut.



- Cut nails carefully. Cut them straight across and file the edges. Do not cut nails too short, as this could lead to ingrown toe nails.
- Never treat corns or calluses yourself. No “bathroom surgery” or medicated pads.
- Always consult your doctor if you have concerns about feet or need appropriate treatment.
- Wear comfortable shoes that fit well and protect your feet.
- Take care of your shoes — shake out your shoes and feel the insides before wearing. Your feet may not be able to feel a pebble or other foreign object, so always inspect your shoes before putting them on.

## MEDICAL CARE

- Take care of your diabetes. Keep your blood sugar under control.
- Do not smoke. Smoking restricts blood flow in your feet.
- Get periodic foot exams. Seeing your foot and ankle surgeon on a regular basis can help prevent the foot complications of diabetics.



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