

DIABETIC FOOT GUIDE

If you are diabetic the best way to know how to care for your feet is to see a podiatrist & after he has determined your level and type of foot risk, follow his instructions. In my office, diabetic foot evaluations end with each patient getting specific instructions on how to care for their feet.

General Care and Hygiene

- Never go barefoot either indoors. Your feet may be numb and you will not feel an injury as it occurs.
- Inspect your feet daily. You may use a mirror to help see the soles of your feet and between toes. Check for breaks in skin, dryness and redness. Ask a friend or family member for help if needed.
- Wash your feet daily and be sure to dry between your toes. Water should be warm, test with your elbow to see if it is too hot.
- For dry feet you may apply a thin coat of moisturizing cream but do not put any between your toes.
- If your feet are cold you may wear loose socks to bed. If your feet are hot DO NOT ice them down. Avoid extreme temperatures.
- Cut toenails straight across and do not cut down into the corners.
- Never cut corns or calluses yourself and do not use commercial corn or callus removers.
- Do not use adhesive tape on your feet.
- Avoid any tight clothing or under garments that might constricts feet, legs or hips.

Physician Communication

- Be sure to see your doctor every 3-4 months. Make sure every doctor you see knows you are diabetic.
- See your podiatrist annually, if you are at higher risk you will need to see your podiatrist more often.
- See your podiatrist promptly if you develop a blister, puncture wound, sore, corn, callus or ingrown toenail. Any bleeding, pus or redness are reasons to see your podiatrist.

Footwear

- Buy only comfortable well fitting shoes. Get help with the fitting and be sure to walk around in them before you buy. Buy shoes late in the day when swelling is more likely to be present.
- Softer leather uppers with plenty of width and toe depth make a good choice.
- Avoid open toes or heels and inspect shoes for rough areas, protruding nails and foreign objects before buying.
- Break in new shoes by wearing them for less than two at a time until you know they will not cause blisters.
- Never wear socks or hosiery with seams. Seams can cause pressure areas and cause skin to break down.
- Wear only clean socks and change them daily. Inspect them before putting them on.