

HEALERS' NOTES

What are neuropathic foot ulcers?

These are wounds caused by prolonged pressure or trauma to a foot. Because these wounds are common on the feet of people with diabetes, they are also referred to as diabetic foot ulcers.

Ulcer risks:

- Dryness and cracking
- Numbness in the foot
- Pulling up of the toes
- Loss of the arch

Six out of 10 people with these ulcers will develop more.

Reduce your chances by:

- Inspecting your feet daily for signs of redness, blisters, or sores.
- Wearing prescribed footwear for walking.
- Wearing clean, absorbent socks with your shoes.
- Seeking professional foot and nail care.
- Avoiding extreme temperatures.
- Never going barefoot
- Never soaking your feet.
- Never trimming corns and calluses at home.

Your Wound Healing Center is a resource for the care and maintenance of your wounds and feet.

You'll see trained professionals who will care for your wound. Your wound will be evaluated completely, including all diagnostic testing. Your treatment plan will be developed. You'll be given information about the treatment of your wound and how you can prevent new wounds.

What will happen during my first visit?

- We'll examine you physically and ask about your personal and family medical history so that we can develop a plan of care just for you.
- We'll check your feet by testing for feeling, blood flow, and oxygen supply to them.
- We'll examine your wound.
- We might remove any dead tissue in and around the wound.
- We'll teach you how to care for your wound at home.
- We'll schedule further testing, if it's needed.



Wooster Community Hospital
Hyperbaric Medicine and
Wound Healing Center
1761 Beall Avenue Annex • Wooster, OH
Phone: 330-263-8750 • Fax: 330-263-8752
www.woosterhospital.org

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Remember:

- **Inspect** your feet daily.
- **Use moisturizers** on your feet to help reduce dryness and cracking, but do not use on the ulcer site or between the toes.
- **Wear your special shoes** or have special inserts made for your shoes to distribute your weight more evenly on your feet.
- **Keep shoes/slippers** next to your bed so that you don't walk barefoot.
- **Protect your feet** from hot sidewalks or cold environments.

Never:

- **Put anything into an open wound** that isn't prescribed by your physician.
- **Neglect small wounds** because they can lead to serious complications which may result in the loss of a limb.

What about follow up visits?

Each time you come to the Wound Healing Center, we'll re-examine your wound to see what progress has been made. We'll review your test results and remove any dead tissue. We'll also answer any questions you have about how to care for your wound or what's going to happen next.

How can you help?

The best things you can do are to:

- Rest according to your doctor's instructions.
- Take medication as ordered.
- Stop smoking.
- Inspect your feet daily and report any changes to your physician.

Call the Wound Healing Center if you notice:

- Increased pain at the wound site.
- New redness, blisters, or sores on either foot.
- Redness or swelling around the wound or spreading away from the wound.
- Any change in color or amount of drainage from the wound

After your wound is healed

You may have been told not to walk, or *weight bear*, while your wound is healing. Your doctor will let you know when you can walk again. Use your special shoes or inserts to avoid putting pressure on specific points in your feet and balance your weight.