

HEALERS' NOTES

Foot care for people with diabetes

Most people will walk around 115,000 miles in their lifetimes – that's the same as walking around the world five times. Take care of your feet so they'll take care of you!

Take care of your feet every day

- **Wash your feet daily.** Dry carefully, especially between your toes. If your feet are dry, use a moisturizing cream. Apply the cream after bathing and drying your feet. Never put oil or cream between your toes. Do not soak your feet (unless you are instructed to do so by your health care provider.)
- **Change shoes twice a day.**
- **Inspect your feet daily** for blisters, cuts and scratches. Don't pull loose pieces of skin off your feet. Use an unbreakable mirror to see the bottoms of your feet. Always check between your toes. If your vision is impaired, ask a family member to help.
- **Cut your toenails straight across.** Smooth the corners with an emery board. Don't trim into the corners of your toenails or cut ingrown toenails. Don't file nails too short.
- **Do not cut corns or calluses.** Do not use corn plasters or chemicals to remove them.
- **Do not use strong antiseptic solutions** or adhesive tape on your feet.
- **Inspect the inside of shoes daily** for foreign objects, nail points, torn linings, and rough areas.
- **Never wear shoes without socks.** Wear properly fitting socks made of cotton or wool. Do not wear mended socks. Avoid socks with seams. Change socks daily.



Adapted from research conducted by Craig Broussard, Regional Director of Clinical Services, National Wound Healing Corporation. Used with permission. Broussard, C. L. (2002). Loss of protective foot sensation and shoe wearing habits in persons with diabetes mellitus. (Doctoral dissertation, Texas Woman's University, 2002). [Dissertation Abstracts International](#), 63(3), 1264. (UMI No. 3046299).

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Stay healthy

- If you smoke, **STOP NOW**.
- **Avoid temperature extremes.**
 - Test water with elbow *before* bathing.
 - Do not walk on hot surfaces such as sandy beaches, black top, or cement around swimming pools.
 - If you feet feel cold, wear socks; do not apply hot water bottles or heating pads.
 - In winter, take precautions against cold weather by wearing protective footwear, i.e. fleecelined boots.
- **Avoid crossing your legs.** This can cause pressure on the nerves and blood vessels.

More Foot Care Do's and Don'ts

- Do rub with a callus file, emery board, pumice stone, or towel after showering/bathing.
- Do use small amounts of talcum, bath powder, or mild foot powder if your feet perspire.
- Do discuss footwear options with your healthcare provider.
- Don't smoke.
- Don't walk barefoot, even inside.
- Don't keep feet too wet or too dry.
- Don't walk on an injured foot.
- Don't use lotion between toes.

You and your physician are a team

- Notify your physician/podiatrist at once if any redness, blisters, or wounds develop on your feet. Be sure to tell your podiatrist that you have diabetes.
- During regular physician visits, be sure that your feet are examined at least four (4) times a year.



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