

Foot Care with Diabetes

Increase High blood sugar from diabetes causes two problems with your feet.

1. High sugar in your blood can damage nerves in your legs and feet.
2. High sugar in your blood can also slow down the flow of blood to your legs and feet. A sore or infection may take longer to heal. If you smoke and have diabetes this makes blood flow problems much worse.

You may have heard about someone who has had an amputation. **If you take care of your feet every day this does not have to happen.**

What can you do to take care of your feet?

- **Tell your doctor** right away about **any** foot problems. Do not let small problems become big problems.
- **Wash your feet in warm water every day. Do not use hot water.** Do not soak your feet. Dry your feet well, even between your toes.
- **Look at your feet every day. Check for sores, blisters, redness, calluses, or other problems.** Use a mirror if you cannot check your feet by lifting them up. You can also ask someone else to check your feet.



- **If your skin is dry, rub lotion on your feet after you wash and dry them.** Do not put lotion between your toes.



- **File corns and calluses gently.** Use an emery board or pumice stone. Do this after your bath or shower. Move the emery board in only one direction.

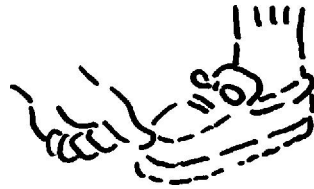


- **Cut your toenails once a week. Cut toenails after a bath or shower when they are soft.** Cut them in the shape of the toe and not too short. Do not cut into the corners because you might cut the skin. If you cannot cut your own toenails, ask a friend or family member.



- **Never walk barefoot.** Always wear shoes or slippers, even when you are at home.

- **Always wear socks or panty hose.** Do not wear socks or stockings that are too tight below your knee.



- **Wear shoes that fit well. Buy shoes made of canvas or leather.** Shop for shoes at the end of the day when your feet are bigger. Break in shoes slowly. Wear them 1 to 2 hours each day for the first 1 to 2 weeks. When buying new shoes, take a piece of paper and draw the outline of your foot. Place your shoe on top of the outline. If you can see the outline of your foot, your shoes are **too small**.

What can you do at your doctor visits?

- Take off your shoes and socks at every visit.
- Ask your doctor to look at your feet.
- Ask your doctor to check the feeling in your feet. It is a very simple test.



For more information

Contact a **Diabetes Educator** (nurses, dietitians, pharmacists, and other health professionals)

To find a diabetes teacher near you, call:

The American Association of Diabetes Educators toll-free at 1-800-TEAMUP4 (1-800-832-6874) or visit the website at www.aadenet.org and click on "Find an Educator."