

Advice & Information

Diabetes Foot Care

Low Risk level 1 & 2

South West Yorkshire Partnership 
NHS Foundation Trust

Podiatry Department



With all of us in mind

GENERAL ADVICE

Diabetes is a lifelong condition which can cause foot problems. Some of these problems can occur because the nerves and blood vessels supplying your feet become damaged.

This can affect:

- The feeling in your feet (peripheral neuropathy);
and
- The circulation in your feet (ischaemia).

These changes can be very gradual and you may not notice them. This is why it is essential you have your feet screened every year by a suitably-trained professional.

Controlling your diabetes, cholesterol and blood pressure, and taking regular exercise all help reduce the risk of developing problems.

If you smoke you are strongly advised to stop as this affects the blood vessels and oxygen circulation.

Your foot screening has shown that you do not have nerve or blood vessel damage at present and so you are currently at low risk of developing foot complications because of diabetes.

As your feet are in good condition, you may not need regular podiatry treatment.

If you follow the simple advice in the leaflet, you should be able to carry out your own foot care unless you develop a specific problem.

ADVICE ON KEEPING YOUR FEET HEALTHY

CHECK YOUR FEET EVERY DAY

You should check your feet every day. If you find any breaks in the skin, minor cuts or blisters, cover them with a sterile dressing then re-check and apply clean dressings daily. Do not burst blisters. If the problems do not heal within a few days, or if there are signs of infection (swelling, heat, redness or pain), contact your GP.

WASH YOUR FEET EVERY DAY

You should wash your feet every day in warm water and with a mild soap. Rinse them thoroughly and dry them carefully, especially between the toes. Do not soak your feet as this can damage your skin.

MOISTURISE YOUR FEET EVERY DAY

If your skin is dry, apply a moisturizing cream every day, avoiding the areas between the toes.

TOENAILS

Cut or file your toenails regularly, following the curve of the end of the toe. Use a nail file to make sure that there are no sharp edges which could press into the next toe. Do not cut down the sides of your nails as you may create a 'spike' of the nail which could result in an ingrown toenail.

(See our 'Nail Cutting' Advice and Information leaflet).

SOCKS, STOCKINGS AND TIGHTS

You should change your socks, stockings or tights every day. They should not have bulky seams and the tops should not be elasticated.

AVOID WALKING BAREFOOT

If you walk barefoot you risk injuring your feet by stubbing your toes and standing on sharp objects which can damage the skin.

CHECK YOUR SHOES

Check the bottom of your shoes before putting them on to make sure that nothing sharp such as a pin, nail, or glass has pierced the outer sole. Also run your hand inside each shoe to check that no small objects such as small stones have fallen in.

BADLY-FITTING SHOES

Badly-fitting shoes are a common cause of irritation or damage to feet. The professional who screened your feet may give you advice about the shoes you are wearing and about buying new shoes. (See our 'Footwear' Advice and Information leaflet).

OVER THE COUNTER CORN REMEDIES

Do not use over the counter corn remedies. They are not recommended for anyone with diabetes as they can cause damage to the skin that can cause infection.

(See our 'Corns' Advice and Information Leaflet).

**If you discover any problems with your feet,
contact your GP for advice.**

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you choose to use a private Podiatry practitioner then ensure they are Health Professions Council Registered (HPC Registered).

In most cases a qualified beautician can cut simple toe nails too. See your local telephone directory for names and numbers.

If you require further information, contact our office.

**Podiatry Department, New Street Health Centre,
Upper New Street, Barnsley S70 1LP**

Telephone: **01226 644809**

References / Further reading



The Society of
Chiropodists and Podiatrists

<http://www.feetforlife.org/footcare>



Diabetes
UK

<http://www.diabetes.org.uk>

Patient UK

The same health information as provided
by GPs to patients during consultations

<http://www.patient.co.uk>

Chair: Joyce Catterick OBE

Chief Executive: Steven Michael



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