



Foot Care Guidelines for People with Diabetes

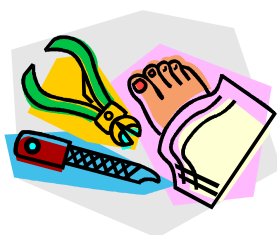


Inspection

- Examine your feet every day in a place with good light. If you cannot bend over to see the bottoms of your feet, ask a family member to help you or use a mirror.
- Look for dry places and cracks in the skin, ingrown toenails, corns, calluses, swelling, sores, blisters, and places that are red or pale or hot or cold.

Bathing

- Wash your feet daily in warm (not hot) water. Before you put your feet into the water, test the temperature with your wrist or elbow to prevent burning your feet.
- Do not soak your feet for long periods of time in order to avoid dry skin.
- Use a mild soap and rinse well. Gently dry your feet with a soft towel, making sure to dry between the toes.
- Use a mild cream or lotion to soften dry feet. Avoid the areas between your toes.



Toenails

- Cut your toenails after bathing, when they are soft and easy to trim.
- Avoid cutting nails shorter than the ends of your toes. File sharp corners and rough edges with an emery board.
- Do not use sharp objects to poke or dig under the toenail or around the cuticle.

Corns and Calluses

- Avoid using do-it-yourself corn or callus removers. These can cause burns and may harm healthy skin.
- Never cut your corns and calluses with a razor blade. This can lead to infections.
- Use pads on corns to reduce pressure.

Socks and Shoes



- Change your socks daily. Wear soft socks or stockings that fit well and that are mostly natural fibers, such as cotton or wool, to allow skin to breathe.
- Avoid going barefoot. Wear shoes or hard-soled slippers to cover and protect your feet.
- At the beach, avoid walking barefoot on the hot sand. Put sunscreen on the tops of your feet.
- Before you put on your shoes, shake them out. Feel the inside for pebbles, cracks, rough or worn spots that may hurt your feet.

Treatment of Injuries



- If you stumble or bump a hard object, look at your feet to be sure that there is no damage.
- If your foot is hurt, don't keep walking on it. That can cause more damage.
- Treat blisters, cuts, and scratches right away. Wash with soap and water and apply a mild antiseptic. Never use strong chemicals such as boric acid, Epsom salts, or any antiseptic that contains a dye.
- Never open blisters yourself. This can lead to infections.
- Cover all injuries with a bandage or dry sterile dressing.

You should see a doctor...

- If you have a sore that does not begin to heal within 2 days.
- If you have ingrown toenails or nails that are thick and tend to split when cut. If you have difficulty cutting your toenails.
- If you have corns, calluses or other problems that don't go away.