

<i>Client:</i>	<i>Date:</i>
<i>Clinician:</i>	

Diabetes can damage nerves in your feet and cause **neuropathy**, which makes it hard for you to feel injuries or sore spots. Diabetes can also change blood flow, making it harder for small problems, like a blister, to heal properly. Minor injuries can quickly become serious infections that send you to the hospital. Practice self-care to protect your feet and keep them healthy.

Take Special Care

- Inspect your feet daily for problems such as redness, blisters, cracks, dry skin, or numbness.
 - Use a mirror to see the bottoms of your feet or ask for help.
- Manage your diabetes. Monitor and control your blood sugar. Take all your medications.
- Avoid walking barefoot, even indoors.
- Wash your feet with warm water and mild soap. Dry well, especially between toes.
- Don't treat corns/calluses yourself. Talk to your doctor for assistance trimming toenails.
- Use moisturizing cream or lotion if you have dry skin, but don't use it between toes.
- Don't use heating pads on your feet. If you have neuropathy, you could get a burn & not feel it
- Stop smoking. Smoking restricts blood flow and can make it harder for wounds to heal.

Have Regular Checkups

Foot problems can develop quickly. So be sure to follow your healthcare team's schedule for regular checkups. During office visits, take off your shoes and socks as soon as you get in the exam room. Ask your healthcare provider to examine your feet for problems. Regular checkups can also help keep track of the blood flow and feeling in your feet. If you have neuropathy, you may need to have checkups more often.

Wear Proper Footwear

Wearing proper footwear is very important. If too much pressure has damaged areas of your feet, your healthcare provider may recommend changing your footwear. In some cases, avoiding high heels or tight work boots may be all that's needed. Your healthcare provider may recommend special shoes or custom inserts. These help protect your feet and keep existing irritations from getting worse.

Make Sure Shoes and Socks Fit

Any pair of shoes—new or old—should feel comfortable as soon as you put them on. There shouldn't be any rubbing when you walk. Wear the right shoe for any activity. Buy shoes at the end of the day, when your feet are larger. Make sure they provide support without feeling too loose. Cotton socks are best to help to absorb sweat.

Note: If you have any kind of break in the skin of your foot or ankle, keep the area clean. Then call your doctor—especially if the area doesn't appear to be healing.

Online Source: Centers for Disease Control [<http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/pubs/tcyd/foot.htm>]
Online Source: National Diabetes Education Program [http://www.ndep.nih.gov/diabetes/pubs/Feet_HCGuide.pdf]

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Contact the on-call nurse if you are experiencing any change in your current health condition.
For ALL emergencies requiring IMMEDIATE medical attention, call 911.
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