

## Foot Care for the Diabetic

Information to help YOU take care of your FEET and keep them HEALTHY!



1. **CHECK, CLEAN, LOTION, and CARE for your feet daily!**
2. **CHECK:** Look between your toes, top and bottom. If unable to see any area of your feet, use a mirror. If your vision is impaired, ask someone who lives with you to do the daily inspection. Look for swollen, red areas, breaks in the skin, cuts, scratches, or patches of dry skin. Feel your feet for cold areas (could indicate circulation problems) or warm areas (could indicate infection). If you find anything abnormal for you, please **DO** call your doctor!
3. **CLEAN:** Wash your feet in warm, soapy water (**NOT** hot water) daily. **DO NOT** soak your feet. Dry thoroughly, especially between your toes.
4. **LOTION:** Apply lotion to the top and bottom of your feet. **DO NOT** apply between your toes.
5. **CARE:** Trim your toenails straight across. Be careful **NOT** to cut skin around your nails (could lead to infection). If you can't, find a professional to cut them properly.
6. **DO NOT** cut your corns or calluses – **DO** see your doctor.
7. **DO NOT** go barefoot. Hot sand and pavement may cause burns! Always wear your socks and shoes that fit your feet and are **NOT** too tight, or rub and irritate your feet.
8. **DO NOT** use hot-water bottles and heating pads. If too hot, they will burn your skin! And, if have problems with nerves, you may not feel a burn.
9. **DO** wear white cotton socks without toe seams and change daily. Remember to check your socks every night when you take them off - look for drainage or bleeding. **DO** notify your doctor if you find any soiled area or blood; it may mean you have an open sore that needs attention.
10. **DO** wear proper fitting shoes! Think of them as protecting your feet from developing a variety of problems – corns, blisters, calluses, hammer toes, and ingrown toenails. If you have *Diabetes, poor circulation, and/or nerve damage*, minor foot problems, such as, blisters, breaks or cracks in the skin, can lead to serious complications. Decreased feeling, or nerve damage associated with diabetes can make you less aware of an injury or foot infection; and can lead to an amputation if healing is poor.
11. **DO** wear shoes made of breathable canvas, leather or suede. **DO NOT** wear plastic, other materials, flip flops, or open toes shoes. If you have new shoes, *break them in slowly* over a week's period of time.
12. **DO** call your diabetes doctor, or foot doctor if you have an ulcer, blister, bad foot odor, infected cut, a red tender toe (possibly an ingrown toenail), or any changes in your feet, such as pain, tingling, numbness, burning, puncture wound (stepping on nail, etc.), or anything that looks different to you!
13. **DO** have your feet checked every time you visit your physician. Remove your socks and shoes to help remind your doctor that your feet need to be included as part of your physical exam!