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Foot Care for Diabetics



What causes diabetic foot problems?

Foot problems happen most often to people who are over 40 years old or have had diabetes more than 10 years. High blood glucose can damage your blood vessels, causing poor flow to your lower legs and feet. Poor blood flow means a greater chance of infection. High blood glucose can also damage the nerves in your feet. You may not be able to feel a cut or a sore causing serious damage before you even know you have it.

How will I know if I have foot problems?

Take your shoes and socks off at each doctor visit so that your feet can be checked for blood flow and nerve problems. You may have already noticed that you are having pain, tingling and numbness of your feet. This could be a sign that you are having diabetes foot problems.

What can I do to keep from getting foot problems?

- Keep your blood glucose, blood pressure and your blood fats, including cholesterol and triglycerides, in good control.
- Do not smoke or use tobacco products.
- Check your feet daily and follow the guide below:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inspect feet daily for cuts, bruises or any changes in shape. ▪ Do not use corn plasters, or chemicals to remove corns and calluses. ▪ Always wear shoes and socks, even indoors. ▪ Make sure new shoes fit well. Break them in slowly, watching for red areas on your feet. Look for shoes with roomy toe area and stable heel. Ask your doctor about special shoes. ▪ Cut toenails following curve of nail; file with emery board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Protect your feet from very hot or very cold conditions. Test bath water with your elbow before getting in. Don't use heating pads or hot water bottles on feet. ▪ Avoid the use of strong antiseptics or adhesive tape on your feet. ▪ Wash feet daily and dry thoroughly, especially between toes. ▪ Don't soak feet. ▪ Don't cross your legs. ▪ If dry skin, use lotion on top and bottom but not between toes.
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If you see a red area, blister, or cut on your foot, contact your doctor immediately. The earlier you get treatment, the better it will be.