Successfully managing diabetes usually requires taking prescription medication. Talk with your pharmacist to ensure you understand the risks of using over-the-counter (OTC) medications with prescribed medications.

A family physician or internist plays the important role of coordinator. He or she is often the first doctor one sees after a diabetes diagnosis and makes referrals to other specialists on the treatment team.

Diabetes can increase the chances for development of several vascular diseases. Your risk of vascular disease increases with the length of time you have had diabetes, and your risk can increase if you have high blood pressure, smoke, are inactive, are overweight, or eat a high-fat diet.

Podiatrists are uniquely qualified to treat the foot and ankle. Diabetes can alter nerve function as well as limit or restrict blood flow to the feet. Because of this problem, people with diabetes can develop foot complications that may result in amputation if left untreated. If you have diabetes or are at risk for the disease, have a podiatrist check your feet at least twice a year for symptoms, such as a loss of sensation, burning, or tingling.

Diabetes is the leading cause of non-traumatic, lower-limb amputations in the world. To find a podiatrist in your area, visit www.apma.org/findapodiatrist.