

## Foot Health Advice for Patients with Diabetes

- 1.** Check your feet daily for cuts, blisters, bruises, cracked-skin, color changes, and swelling. Use a mirror to inspect the soles of both feet. If you have impaired vision ask a relative or friend to check your feet for you. Report any foot injuries to your doctor without delay.
- 2.** Wash cuts and grazes twice a day with soap and water; apply an antiseptic cream, and cover with a sterile band-aid. Seek medical attention immediately.
- 3.** To avoid burns, test the temperature with your elbow before you place your feet into hot water, and do not place your feet close to warm radiators.
- 4.** To protect your feet from injury, avoid barefoot walking as much as possible, even around the house.
- 5.** Buy new shoes late in the day when your feet are more swollen. Make sure shoes fit well; do not rub the toes or the back of your heels. Try to buy shoes without seams inside.
- 6.** Before you put on your shoes, check inside for stones, sharp objects, and rough places inside the uppers and on the sock liners.
- 7.** Wear socks as much as possible to help prevent blisters. Make sure hosiery is not too tight, and wash your socks or stockings daily.
- 8.** Wash your feet with soap and water every day, taking care to clean between your toes. Dry your feet well, especially between the toes. The daily use of a non-allergic, moisturizing cream or lotion will help keep the skin from cracking, especially around the heels. Do not apply cream between the toes as moisture may cause blisters.
- 9.** If you have flat feet, bunions, hammertoes, or any other structural foot problems, consider orthotic insoles made especially for diabetics. Look for shoes with a deep toe box, to prevent rubbing on the tops of your toes. Your doctor may recommend custom-molded diabetic shoes, especially if you have a history of a recurrent ulcer.
- 10.** Avoid impact aerobics and opt for a more gentle exercise program that reduces the amount of pressure on your feet; and make sure you have the right shoe for whatever fitness activity you choose.
- 11.** Stop smoking now! Nicotine reduces the blood flow to your feet, which may increase the risk of foot ulcers.
- 12.** Do not miss taking your insulin or other prescribed medicines. Use a glucometer to check your blood sugar as advised by your doctor.
- 13.** Have regular checkups with your doctor to make sure all aspects of staying healthy—weight, blood pressure, blood sugar, etc.—are well managed.
- 14.** See your podiatrist at least twice a year for a comprehensive foot check up. Early diagnosis and treatment of a foot problem is always best.

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