

ankle&foot

centers of georgia

Diabetic Foot Care Sheet

Proper foot care is especially critical for diabetics because they are prone to foot problems such as loss of feeling in their feet, changes in the shape of their foot, poor circulation and sores that do not heal. Simple daily foot care can prevent serious problems. According to the National Institute of Health, the following are simple everyday steps that will help prevent serious complications from diabetes:

1. **Take Care of Your Diabetes:** Make healthy life style choices to keep your blood sugar close to normal. Work with your health care team to create a diabetes plan that fits your life style characteristics.
2. **Check Your Feet Daily:** You may have foot problems which you may not be aware of. Check your feet for cuts, sores, red spots, swelling or infected toenails. Checking your feet should become part of your daily routine. If you have trouble bending over to see your feet, use a plastic mirror to help. You can also ask a family member to help. ***Important Reminder:* Be sure to call your doctor immediately if a cut, sore, blister or bruise on your foot does not heal after one day.
3. **Wash Your Feet Every Day:** Wash your feet in warm, NOT HOT, water. Do not soak your feet because your skin will get dry. Before bathing or showering, test the water to make sure it is not too hot. You should use a thermometer or your elbow. Dry your feet well. Be sure you dry between your toes. Use talcum powder to keep the skin dry between the toes.
4. **Keep the Skin Soft and Smooth:** Rub a thin coat of skin lotion or crème on the tops and bottoms of the feet. Do not put lotion between your toes because this might cause an infection.
5. **Trim Your Toenails Each Week or As Needed:** After you wash and dry your feet, trim the nails straight across and smooth them with an emery board or nail file. DO NOT cut into the corners or rip off hang nails. If you have trouble seeing, have loss of feeling in your feet, or your nails are severely thickened, DO NOT cut your own nails. Have a foot doctor trim them for you.
6. **Wear Shoes and Socks At All Times:** Do not walk barefoot, not even indoors. Always wear seamless socks, stockings or nylons with your shoes to prevent the possibility of blisters and sores from developing. Always check inside the shoes and make sure the lining is smooth and that no foreign objects, such as pebbles, are in the shoes.
7. **Protect Your Feet from Hot and Cold:** Always wear shoes at the beach or on hot pavement. Put sunscreen on top of your feet for protection from the sun. Keep your feet away from radiators or open fires. DO NOT use hot water bottles or heating pads on your feet. If your feet are cold, wear seamless socks at night.
8. **Keep the Blood Flowing to Your Feet:** Put your feet up when you are sitting. Wiggle your toes for 5 minutes 2 or 3 times each day. Move your ankles and bend your knees to improve blood flow in your feet and legs.
 - ◆ DO NOT cross your legs for long periods of time.
 - ◆ DO NOT wear tight socks, elastic, rubber bands or garters around your legs.
 - ◆ DO NOT wear restrictive foot wear.
 - ◆ DO NOT smoke.
9. **Be More Active:** Ask your doctor to plan an exercise program that is right for you. Avoid activities that could be hard on your feet. Always include a short warm-up period and wear good, supportive and protective shoes that fit well.
10. **Communicate With Your Doctor:** Let your doctor know immediately if you think you have a foot problem. See your Podiatrist at the Ankle & Foot Centers of Georgia at least once each year for a diabetic foot evaluation.