

Low risk

Diabetes and your feet

Diabetes can lead to foot complications by damaging nerves, the immune system and restricting the blood supply to feet.

This can result in loss of feeling in the feet, changes in the shape of the feet, and foot ulcers that have delayed healing and can become infected. To reduce the risk of foot problems in the future you should maintain good control of your blood glucose levels as nerve damage is associated with poor Diabetes control. Keep to a healthy eating plan recommended by your dietitian, take regular exercise and do not smoke.

Skin care

- Wash your feet daily. Do not soak your feet as this can damage your skin.
- Apply a moisturiser each day to all areas of the feet for dry skin, except between the toes. Always dry well especially between the toes.
- If callous, corns or thickened toenails are causing discomfort see a Podiatrist for treatment.
- Never use sharp instruments, corn plasters or corn cures on your feet as they can damage your skin.
- Avoid direct heat on the skin from open fires and hot water bottles.
- Use of a foot spa is not recommended for patients with Diabetes.
- Never go barefoot.
- Check your feet daily for broken skin, blisters and inflammation. Using a mirror will help.
- Ask a carer or family member to check your feet if you have difficulty seeing.
- Breaks in the skin should be washed and covered with a dry, sterile dressing.
- Do not burst blisters. Seek help or advice from your GP surgery or Podiatrist if you notice signs of infection eg redness, heat, swelling or pain.



Nail care

- Cut and file toenail straight across.
- Do not dig down the sides.
- If a nail is thick, file it regularly with an emery board.



Footwear

- Ensure shoes fit well - length, width and depth. Supportive footwear preferably with Velcro or lace fastening should be worn.
- Trainers are recommended as they are light and cushioning.
- Slip-on shoes should be avoided.
- Change socks, stockings and tights daily.
- Avoid socks with thick seams that might rub the toes.
- Avoid socks with elasticated tops as they can affect the circulation.



On holiday or in hot weather

- Do not wear new shoes on holiday.
- Do not walk barefoot.
- Continue to check feet daily.
- Apply sunscreen to your feet.



Useful contacts

Wirral Community Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust

To manage your appointment with the Podiatry Service call the Centralised Booking Service on 0151 514 2222.

ABL Health Wirral (Smoking cessation support)

ablhealth.co.uk/wirral/

Diabetes UK

diabetes.org.uk

Royal College of Podiatry

rcpod.org.uk

If you would like this information in another format or language, please contact the Your Experience Team on freephone 0800 694 5530. Alternatively you can email wcnt.yourexperience@nhs.net

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