

PUTTING FEET FIRST

Looking after your feet if you have diabetes

Diabetes is a cause of foot disease, which can have complications including amputation. This is why it is especially important that people with diabetes look after their feet.

Check your feet every day, look for changes in shape, cover any cuts or scratches.

Wear shoes that fit properly, make sure you know how to look after your feet and get them checked at least once a year by a healthcare professional.

If you think you have lost feeling in any part of your feet don't go barefoot or use corn removing plasters or blades.

Avoid extremes of temperatures.

YOUR ANNUAL FOOT REVIEW

Every year, everyone who has diabetes should attend a foot examination. This should involve:

Testing the sensation and pulses in your feet

Examining your feet for any deformity or signs of infection or ulceration and checking your footwear is suitable

Asking you about any pain or previous ulceration.

And remember, if you are not being asked to take your shoes and socks off then it doesn't count as a proper foot review!



WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- If there are **no problems** then your risk status will be recorded as low risk. You will be given general advice and then have your feet reviewed again in another 12 months.
- If your **foot does not have full sensation or pulses or there is deformity or infection**, you are at **increased risk of foot problems**, which means you will be referred to a specialist foot protection team for treatment and are likely to have your feet reviewed much more regularly in the future. You will be told this and it will be recorded in your notes.
- If your **foot has a severe deformity or other serious complication**, then you are at **high risk of increasing foot problems** and in most cases should be urgently referred to a ‘multi-disciplinary team’ of diabetes specialists. If you have an ulcer then it is really important that you are referred within 24 hours because they can deteriorate quickly. Then once the problem with your foot has been addressed, you need to focus on preventing future foot disease. This is likely to include regular inspections of your feet, management of your diabetes and making healthy lifestyle changes such as stopping smoking and becoming more physically active. You will be told this and it will be recorded in your notes.

Reference

Putting Feet First: Commissioning a Care Pathway for Footcare Services for People with Diabetes.

www.diabetes.org.uk

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