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Low Risk

**Diabetes Foot Care Information and Advice Leaflet**

Diabetes is a lifelong condition, which can cause foot problems. Some of these problems can occur because the nerves and blood vessels supplying your feet are damaged. This can affect:

* the feeling in your feet (peripheral neuropathy)
* the circulation in your feet (ischaemia).

These changes can be very gradual and you may not notice them. This is why it is essential you have your feet screened every year by a health professional for example, your GP, practice nurse or podiatrist. Your foot screening has shown that you do not have nerve or blood vessel damage at present and so you are currently at **low risk** of developing foot complications because of your diabetes.

Controlling your diabetes, cholesterol and blood pressure, and having your feet screened every year by a suitably trained professional, will help to reduce the risk of developing problems with your feet.

**If you smoke, you are strongly advised to stop. Smoking affects your circulation and can lead to amputation.**

As your feet are in good condition, you will not need regular podiatry treatment. If you follow the simple advice in this leaflet, you should be able to carry out your own foot care unless you develop a specific problem.

**Advice on keeping your feet healthy**

**Check your feet every day**

You should check your feet every day for any blisters, breaks in the skin, pain or any signs of infection such as swelling, heat or redness.

**Wash your feet every day**

You should wash your feet every day in warm water and with a mild soap. Rinse them thoroughly and dry them carefully, especially between the toes. Do not soak your feet as this can damage your skin.

**Moisturise your feet every day**

If your skin is dry, apply a moisturising cream every day, avoiding the areas between your toes.

**Toenails**

Cut or file your toenails regularly, following the curve of the end of your toe. Use a nail file to make sure that there are no sharp edges which could press into the next toe. Do not cut down the sides of your nails as you may create a ’spike’ of nail which could result in an ingrowing toenail.

**Socks, stockings and tights**

You should change your socks, stockings or tights every day. They should not have bulky seams and the tops should not be elasticated.

**Avoid walking barefoot**

If you walk barefoot you risk injuring your feet by stubbing your toes and standing on sharp objects which can damage the skin, which can cause wounds and ulcers.

**Check your shoes**

Check the bottom of your shoes before putting them on to make sure that nothing sharp such as a pin, nail or glass has pierced the outer sole. Also, run your hand inside each shoe to check that no small objects such as small stones have fallen in.

**Badly-fitting shoes**

Badly-fitting shoes are a common cause of irritation or damage to feet. The professional who screened your feet may give you advice about the shoes you are wearing and about buying new shoes. You need to ensure your shoes have a fastening that doesn’t pinch your feet, and that they are wide and deep enough for your feet without causing any pressure areas.

**Minor cuts and blisters**

If you check your feet and discover any breaks in the skin, minor cuts or blisters, you should cover them with a sterile dressing and check them every day. Do not burst blisters. If the problems do not heal within a few days, or if you notice any signs of infection (swelling, heat, redness or pain), contact your podiatry department or GP (their contact numbers are over the page).

**Over-the-counter corn remedies**

Do not use over-the-counter corn remedies. They are not recommended for anyone with diabetes as they can cause damage to the skin that can create problems as these contain an acid and cause burns to the skin, which can lead to ulcers.

**Individual advice: …………………………………………………………………………... ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**Useful Websites for more information:**[www.diabetes.org.uk](http://www.diabetes.org.uk)[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)[www.feetforlife](http://www.feetforlife)

**Local Contact Numbers:**Podiatry Appointments Office: 01375 364465 (open from 10am – 4pm)

**SPOTTING A FOOT ATTACK**

Is your foot red, warm or swollen?

Is there a break in the skin or any discharge (or oozing) on to your socks or stockings?

Do you feel unwell?

**You may not have pain even with a visible wound.**

**Contact your GP, podiatrist or nurse immediately**

**If unavailable, go to your nearest out of hour’s healthcare service or your A&E department.**

Based on the original leaflet produced by the Scottish Diabetes Group – Foot Action Group