

# Diabetic Foot Care

Can diabetes affect the feet?



Poorly-controlled diabetes can result in nerve damage, commonly affecting the foot and legs. In addition, circulation may also be compromised in diabetic patients. This may result in the development of diabetic foot ulcers, diabetic foot infections, or deformity of the feet.

## Diabetic Foot Screening

Early identification and intervention of those at risk of diabetic foot ulcers and other foot infections will prevent complications and reduce the number of amputations.

A team of registered assistant nurses at polyclinics are specially trained to perform diabetic foot screening. They are able to:

- Identify and screen diabetic foot symptoms
- Reduce the risk of foot complications by providing education on proper foot care and good glycaemic (blood sugar level) control
- Refer patients who are at risk to podiatrists for early intervention

## Diabetic Foot Care

Regular care of your feet should minimise the risk of incurring diabetic complications with them. This is what you should do to look after them:

- Check your feet and toes every day for cuts, sores, corns or blisters. If you cannot see the soles of your feet, use a mirror or ask someone to help you.
- See your doctor immediately if you hurt your feet or if your foot changes colour or looks different.
- Choose shoes that are comfortable and fit well, and always wear socks/stockings to protect your feet. Never go barefoot.
- Check the inside of your shoes before wearing them to ensure the lining is smooth and there are no sharp edges or objects inside.
- Wash your feet every day with water and mild soap — but do not soak them; check that the water is not too hot to prevent scalding. Protect your feet from extremely hot or cold temperatures.
- Dry your feet carefully, especially in between the toes. To prevent dryness and cracks, apply moisturising skin lotion all over your feet, but not between your toes.

- Keep the blood flowing to your feet; put your feet up when you are sitting. Wiggle your toes and flex your feet up and down and try not to cross your legs for long periods of time.
- Don't smoke.

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