

Appointments

It is important that you attend all of your appointments with your local Podiatry Department, as well as all of your other regular diabetes appointments. This will reduce the risk of problems developing.

Note: At the very least, you should receive a diabetes review from your GP every year.

If you have any concerns or discover any problems with your feet, it is important that you contact your GP, diabetes healthcare team or local Podiatry Department for advice as soon as possible.

Individual advice

Your next examination is due:

Month: 20

Local contact numbers

Podiatry Department:

GP Clinic:

Low risk feet

Diabetes – information and advice to help protect your life and limbs



Diabetes is a lifelong condition which may cause foot problems. Some of these problems can occur because the nerves and blood vessels are damaged.

This can affect:

- The circulation in your feet (ischaemia)
- The feeling in your feet (peripheral neuropathy).

These changes can be very gradual and you may not notice them. This is why we recommend that you have your feet examined every year.

Your foot examination has shown that you do not have nerve or blood vessel damage at present and you are currently at a **low risk** of developing foot complications and foot ulcers (which are breaks in the skin). The development of foot ulcers in people with diabetes is serious as they are linked to an increased risk of heart attacks, strokes and amputations of the foot or leg.

Controlling your diabetes, cholesterol and blood pressure, quitting smoking, increasing cardiovascular exercise and controlling weight helps to reduce the risk of these life and limb threatening problems.

As your feet are in good condition, you may 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. If you cannot do this yourself ask someone to help you.

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, use 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 ingrown toenail.

Socks and tights

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

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. You may be given advice about buying shoes.

Minor cuts and blisters

If you check your feet and discover any breaks in the skin, or 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.

Hard skin and corns

Do not try to remove hard skin or corns yourself. Your podiatrist will provide treatment and advice where necessary.

Over-the-counter remedies

Never 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.