

## Patient information

### Low Risk Diabetes Foot Care Advice

#### **No Clinical Signs of Poor Circulation, or Nerve Damage and No Foot Deformities**

Therapies Liverpool and South Sefton Podiatry Service

Diabetes is a life-long condition, which can lead to foot problems such as ulcers. These problems can happen as a result of damage to nerves in your feet (affecting feeling) and damage to blood vessels (reducing circulation).

Diabetes can also increase the risk of infection where there are breaks in the skin of your feet e.g. cuts, grazes or blisters.

Having a yearly foot examination carried out by your GP, Practice Nurse or Podiatrist can help prevent damage and detect problems early.

By keeping good control of your diabetes and general health, and by following a simple foot care regime you can help reduce the risk of developing foot problems.

#### **The Do's**

- Wash feet daily and dry thoroughly, especially between your toes.
- Examine your feet daily for broken skin, blisters, and discolouration or swelling. You may need help from a carer or relative. Using a mirror may also be of some help.
- Clean any breaks you have on your skin, cover with a sterile dressing and seek help.
- Moisturise your feet daily. Avoid putting moisturiser between your toes.
- Make sure your shoes fit well i.e. the correct length, width and depth with soft uppers and no bulky seams. Lace ups are good as they prevent your foot sliding about in the shoe. Socks should be free of bulky seams and elasticated tops.
- Examine your shoes regularly for stones, nails and other small objects, which may damage your skin.

## **The Don'ts**

- Don't wear ill-fitting shoes – they may rub, leading to blisters.
- Don't soak your feet – this can lead to your skin splitting.
- Don't walk barefoot – this is one of the most common causes of foot injuries.
- Don't burst blisters – this may lead to infection.
- Don't sit too near heaters or use hot water bottles or electric blankets to warm feet up.
- Don't be tempted to poke down edges of nails with scissors or other sharp implements to ease an ingrown toenail.
- Don't remove corns or hard skin yourself with corn remedies as these contain strong acids.
- Don't smoke - this reduces the circulation to your feet.

**If you notice any signs of infection - swelling, heat, redness or pain contact your GP, Podiatrist or local diabetes clinic urgently.**

## **General Advice**

It is important to try and maintain good control of your blood sugar levels, as nerve damage is associated with poor diabetes control.

Blood vessels are also damaged by a high fat diet and smoking.

By keeping to the diet recommended by your dietician, taking regular exercise and stopping smoking you can help preserve and improve your circulation.

All Liverpool and South Sefton NHS Podiatrists are registered with the Health Professions Council.

## **Individual Advice**

## Feedback

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future.

Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

## Further information

### Podiatry Department

### Royal Liverpool Hospital

Tel: 0151 706 2000 and ask for bleep 4118

Text phone number: 18001 0151 706 2000

Bleep 4118

**Author: Liverpool and South Sefton Podiatrists**

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