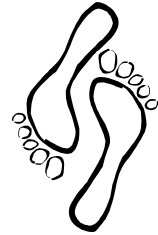


DIABETES AND FOOT CARE

People with diabetes are more likely to have problems with poor circulation or loss of sensation in their feet. This can lead to variety of foot problems including dry skin, cracked heels, changes in the shape of the foot, and skin ulcers. The good news is that if you know how to take care of your feet, you may be able to lessen or prevent these problems.



HOW TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR FEET

There are some simple steps you can take to avoid injury and reduce the risk of damage to your feet. Spending some time caring for your feet on a regular basis can help keep them healthy.



INSPECTING YOUR FEET

- Check your feet daily. This includes the top and bottom of your feet and between each of your toes. If you have difficulty bending, use a mirror to examine the bottom of your feet or ask someone to help you.
- Look at your feet in a place with good lighting. A good time to do this is after you take a bath or shower.
- Check for changes. Look for cuts, scratches, blisters, corns, ingrown toenails or signs of infections. Also look for white, moist wrinkly skin, especially between toes.
- Feel for increased heat in the skin. Hot spots may suggest the presence of underlying infection or inflammation. If you have nerve damage in your foot, there may be little or no pain to alert you to these problems.
- Keep your feet clean. Wash them daily with a soft warm flannel and mild soap. Remember to check the water temperature with your wrist or elbow to ensure that the water is not too hot to avoid burning your feet.
- Dry your feet. To dry your feet use soft towel. Remember to dry between each and every one of your toes.
- Apply lotion to the tops and bottoms of your feet after every wash. A mild unperfumed hand and body lotion will help reduce skin dryness.



TOENAILS

Only cut your own toenails if ...

- your diabetes well controlled
- Your eyesight is good
- Circulation is good
- You have no loss of feeling in your feet



Cut them straight across. Do not cut the nails too short. Best time to cut your nails is after bathing when they are soft and easy to trim.

If you develop an ingrown toenail, seek medical attention. Do not try to treat it yourself.

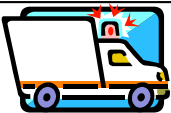


SHOES

- Never walk barefoot at home or outside. Wear shoes and socks in the house and outside every day to protect and support your feet.
- Check inside your shoes for sharp objects, stones etc that might hurt your feet.
- Lace ups or a Velcro/strap and buckle fastening are essential for good foot support. A round and deep toe box will prevent the shoe from rubbing your toes and causing corns and blisters.
- Shoes must fit correctly. Avoid shoes that are too tight or pinch.

SMOKING AND YOUR FEET

If you smoke, please consider giving up! Smoking badly effects the circulation to the feet, increasing your risk of diabetic foot infections.



Emergency

The Emergency Clinic is for:

- Infections
- Ingrowing toenails
- Ulcers/sores
- Cuts
- Fractures

No appointments is necessary.

THE EMERGENCY CLINIC

At St Leonards Department of Food Health

Monday to Friday

9.00am to 9.30 am

Outside these times - see your GP or to go to
Accident and Emergency at Homerton Hospital or
Minor Injuries at St Barts Hospital.

Department of Foot Health

Ground Floor C Block

St Leonards primary Care Centre

Nuttall Street

London

N1 5LZ

Tel: 020 7301 33 47

Tel: 020 7683 4046

Fax: 020 7301 3348