



## Diabetic Foot Care to Avoid Serious Foot Problems

- 1. Inspect your feet daily.** Check your feet for cuts, blisters, redness, swelling, or nail problems. Use a magnifying hand mirror to look at the bottom of your feet. Call your doctor if you notice anything.
- 2. Wash your feet in lukewarm (not hot) water.** Proper foot care requires that you keep your feet clean by washing them daily. Check the water temperature with your elbow since you may lose feeling in your hands. Only use lukewarm water, like the temperature you'd use on a newborn baby. With hot water, you could burn the skin on your feet and not feel it.
- 3. Be gentle when bathing your feet.** Wash them using a soft washcloth or sponge. Dry by blotting or patting, and make sure to carefully dry between the toes.
- 4. Moisturize your feet - but not between your toes.** Use a moisturizer daily to keep dry skin from itching or cracking.
- 5. Cut nails carefully and straight across.** Also, file the edges. Cutting them too short could lead to ingrown toenails.
- 6. Never trim corns or calluses.** No "bathroom surgery" - let your doctor do the job.
- 7. Wear clean, dry socks.** Change them daily.



**8. Avoid wearing the wrong type of socks.** Avoid tight elastic bands, they reduce circulation. Don't wear thick or bulky socks as they can fit poorly and irritate the skin.

**9. Wear socks to bed.** If your feet get cold at night, wear socks. Never use a heating pad or hot water bottle.

**10. Shake out your shoes and inspect the inside before wearing.** Remember, you may not feel a pebble or roofing nail sticking through the sole of the shoe.

**11. Keep your feet warm and dry.** Don't get your feet wet in rain. Wear warm socks and shoes in winter.

**12. Never walk barefoot.** Not even at home! You could step on something and cut or break the skin.

**13. Take care of your diabetes.** Keep your blood sugar levels under control.

**14. Don't smoke.** Smoking restricts blood flow in your feet and severely limits healing of cuts or skin infections.

**15. Get periodic foot exams.** See your podiatrist on a regular basis for an exam to help prevent the foot complications of diabetes.