Tender Care for Your Feet

Diabetes can cause nerve damage, which reduces sensation in your feet. Diabetes may also affect blood flow in your legs and feet, making it harder for cuts or sores to heal. Small injuries may become infected and can become very serious.

Daily care

- Wash your feet in warm water every day. Dry them carefully, especially between your toes.
- Look at your feet every day to check for cuts, sores, blisters, redness, calluses, or other problems. If you cannot bend over or pull your feet up to check them, use a mirror, or ask someone else to check your feet.
- If your skin is dry, rub lotion on your feet after you wash and dry them. Do not put lotion between your toes.
- Smooth corns and calluses gently with an emery board or pumice stone. Do this after your bath or shower. Do not use a pocketknife or razor blade that can cut your skin.
- Cut your toenails once a week after a bath.

Periodic foot exam

- Remind the health care provider to check your feet at every visit.
- Get a complete foot exam once a year. If you have problems with your feet, have the health provider check them every 3 to 6 months.

Footwear

- Wear well-cushioned shoes and socks at all times. Do not go barefoot.
- Change your socks every day, and make sure they are clean and soft.
- Buy shoes that are roomy and allow your feet to "breathe."
- Medicare provides coverage of special shoes for people with diabetes. Check with your doctor to see if you qualify.