



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 with soap in warm (not hot) water every day. Test the water to make sure it's not too hot. Dry them carefully, especially between your toes. Don't soak your feet.
- Look at your feet every day to check for cuts, sores, blisters, redness, calluses, or other problems. If you can't 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 a thin coat of lotion on your feet after you wash and dry them. Don't put lotion between your toes.
- If your health care provider tells you to, smooth corns and calluses gently with an emery board or pumice stone. Do this after your bath or shower. Don't use a pocketknife or razor blade that can cut your skin.
- Trim your toenails, when needed, after you wash and dry your feet. Use toenail clippers and trim your nails straight across.



Periodic foot exam

- Remind your 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 your health care provider check them every 3 to 6 months.

Footwear

- Wear well-cushioned shoes and socks at all times. Don't go barefoot.
- Change your socks every day, and make sure they're 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 health care provider to see if you qualify.