

Diabetes

- **WASH FEET DAILY.** Using mild soap and lukewarm water, wash your feet daily. Dry with a soft towel, especially between the toes, and dust your feet with Gold Bond Medicated powder to wick away moisture. If the skin is dry, use a moisturizing cream (use only at night), but avoid getting it between the toes. This prevents moisture build up in the shoes.
- **INSPECT FEET AND TOES DAILY.** Check your feet every day for cuts, bruises, sores or changes to the toenails, such as thickening or discoloration. If you can't do it, ask someone to help you, or use a magnifying (makeup) mirror on the floor.
- **LOSE WEIGHT.** Diabetics are often overweight, which doubles the risk of complications.
- **WEAR DIABETIC SOCKS.** Socks made of an acrylic blend are good, but avoid those with seams, which can cause blisters or other skin injuries. We sell Dr. Comfort Diabetic socks here for \$12.00 and they are cushioned in the toes and heel, areas of high pressure and impact.
- **STOP SMOKING.** Tobacco causes circulatory problems, and this is magnified 12 fold in patients with diabetes.
- **CUT TOENAILS STRAIGHT ACROSS.** Never cut into the corners, or taper, which could trigger an ingrown toenail. Use an emery board to gently file away sharp corners or snags. If your nails are hard to trim, ask your podiatrist for assistance. If you have numbness in the feet DO NOT attempt to cut your nails.
- **EXERCISE.** As a means to keep weight down and improve circulation, walking is one of the best exercises for the diabetic patient. Be sure to wear appropriate athletic shoes when exercising. Ask your podiatric physician what's best for you.
- **SEE YOUR PODIATRIC PHYSICIAN.** Annual checkups by your podiatric physician are the best way to maintain your foot health.
- **BE PROPERLY MEASURED AND FITTED EVERY TIME YOU BUY NEW SHOES.** Shoes are of supreme importance to diabetics. Poorly fitted shoes are involved in 50% of the problems that lead to amputations. Because foot size and shape may change over time, everyone should have their feet measured by an experienced shoe fitter when they buy a new pair of shoes.

New shoes should not require a "break-in" period, though it's a good idea to wear them for short periods of time at first. Shoes should have leather or mesh uppers, fit both the length and width of the foot, leave room for toes to wiggle freely, and be cushioned and sturdy.
- **DON'T GO BAREFOOT.**
- **DON'T WEAR HIGH HEELS, SANDALS OR SHOES WITH POINTED TOES.** These types of footwear can put undue pressure on parts of the foot causing diabetic ulcers.
- **DON'T DRINK IN EXCESS.** Alcohol can contribute to neuropathy (nerve damage) which is one of the possible outcomes of having diabetes.
- **NEVER TRY TO REMOVE CALLUSES, CORNS OR WARTS BY YOURSELF.** OTC preparations that remove warts or corns should be avoided because they can burn the skin and cause irreplaceable damage to the foot of a diabetic sufferer.

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