

12 Steps to Happier Feet

Taking care of your feet is an important part of successfully managing diabetes. Take a look at these simple steps to help you make foot care management easier and keep you on the path of living well with diabetes.

1 Take care of your diabetes

Make healthy lifestyle choices (including not smoking) to keep your blood glucose (blood sugar), blood pressure, and cholesterol close to normal. Doing so may help prevent or delay diabetes-related foot problems.

2 Check feet everyday

Check your feet every day for cuts, sores, swelling, and infected toenails. Call your doctor right away if a cut, sore, blister, or bruise on your foot does not begin to heal after one day.

3 Wash feet daily

Wash feet in warm water but do not soak your feet — your skin will get dry. Make sure to dry well and dry between your toes. Use talcum powder or cornstarch to keep the skin between your toes dry.

4 Keep your skin soft and smooth

Rub a thin coat of skin lotion or cream on the tops and bottoms of your feet. Do not moisturize between your toes because this might trap moisture and lead to further skin problems.

5 Smooth corns and calluses gently

If you have corns or calluses, check with your doctor for best care tips. If you have neuropathy (nerve damage), do not care for these yourself. If your doctor allows, use a pumice stone to smooth corns and calluses after bathing.

6 Trim toenails weekly

Do not cut your own toenails if you have neuropathy, vision impairment, or if toenails are thick or yellowed. If able, trim toenails with clippers after you wash and dry your feet. Trim straight across without cutting the corners. Smooth toenails with an emery board or nail file.

7 Wear comfortable shoes and socks at all times

Do not walk barefoot, not even indoors. A good pair of slippers around the house provides extra protection. When wearing shoes, always wear socks or stockings to help avoid blisters and sores. Before putting shoes on, check the insides for any debris and make sure the lining is smooth.

8 Protect feet from hot and cold

Keep your feet away from radiators and open fires and do not put hot water bottles or heating pads on your feet. Wear socks at night if your feet are cold. Be sure to wear warm shoes or boots in cold weather and check your feet often to avoid frostbite.

9 Keep blood flowing to your feet

Take time throughout the day to ensure good circulation in your feet. Put your feet up when you're sitting. Be sure to wiggle your toes for five minutes two or three times a day and move your ankles up and down and in and out to improve blood flow. Don't cross your legs for long periods of time.

10 Be more active

Ask your doctor to help you plan a daily activity program that's right for you. Avoid activities that are hard on the feet, such as running and jumping. Always include a warm-up and cool-down period and wear athletic shoes that fit well and provide good support.

11 Talk with your doctor

Your doctor is one of your strongest allies when managing diabetes and foot health. Ask your doctor about any questions about foot care such as: Can you check the sense of feeling and pulses in my feet? Am I likely to have serious foot problems? Would special shoes help my feet stay healthy?

12 Wear the right footwear

Proper footwear is very important for preventing serious foot problems. When not wearing diabetic shoes, comfortable athletic or walking shoes are good for daily wear. They support your feet and allow them to breathe.

Learn more at

<https://www.diabetes.org/living-with-diabetes/complications/footcare>

Educational content provided by Dr. Comfort

