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GUIDELINES FOR DIABETIC FOOT CARE

Many diabetic foot problems arise from a combination of circumstances, but two factors are most common: Peripheral vascular disease and peripheral neuropathy. Poor circulation causes hypo-sensitivity (reduce feeling). Neuropathy can result in charcot joints (a breakdown of the foot structure), multiple fractures and deformities. Due to these complications, proper foot care and proper footwear take on a new importance to the diabetic.

- Do not smoke. Smoke negatively affects blood circulation.
- Inspect feet daily for blisters, cuts and scratches. A mirror can aid in seeing the bottoms of the feet. Always check between the toes.
- Wash feet daily. Dry them carefully, especially between the toes.
- Avoid temperature extremes. Always test your bath water with your elbow before stepping in.
- If feet feel cold at night, wear socks. Do not apply hot water bottles or a heating pad. Do not soak feet in hot water.
- Never walk barefooted.
- Do not use chemical agents for the removal of corns and calluses. Do not cut corns and calluses, allow a healthcare provider to do it.
- Inspect the inside of shoes daily for foreign objects, torn linings, rough areas and any sharp points.
- Wear properly fitting stockings/socks. Do not wear mended stocking or socks. Avoid stockings with seams. Change stockings/socks daily
- Do not wear shoes without stocking and don't wear sandals that have a strap between the toes.
- Cut nails straight across.
- Avoid crossing your legs as this can cause pressure on the nerves and blood vessels.
- In cold weather, take special precautions. Wear wool socks and protective foot gear.
- Notify your health care provider at once should you develop a blister or sore on your foot.
- See your physician regularly and be sure that your feet are examined at each visit.

