The Do’s and Don’ts of Foot Care

Many people with diabetes have problems with their feet. You should know your risk factors for foot problems. You can prevent serious problems with your feet by following these tips.

Check your feet daily:
- Look for cuts, cracks, red areas or blisters and remember to look between your toes.
- Use a mirror if you cannot see or reach the bottom of your feet.
- See your doctor right away if there is a problem.

Protect your feet – always wear shoes:
- Wear supportive shoes.
- Wear clean socks. Change them daily.
- See a footwear specialist if you have red areas, bunions, calluses or your feet hurt.
- Shake your shoes before putting them on to make sure nothing has dropped inside.
- Wear your orthotics if you have them.
- Don’t wear shoes that are too tight or fit your feet poorly.
- Don’t walk barefoot inside or outside.
- Don’t wear tight socks, garters or knee-highs.

Keep your skin clean and soft:
- Wash your feet daily but don’t soak them. There is a risk of infection if there is a break in the skin.
- Check that the water is not too hot.
- Dry your feet well.
- Apply lotion every day. Remember your heels.
- Don’t apply lotion between your toes.
- Don’t use hot water bottles or heating pads.
Don’t hurt your feet with clippers or razors:
- Trim your nails straight across.
- Use a pumice stone on your calluses.
- Don’t cut your own calluses or corns.
- Visit a foot clinic if you cannot reach your feet, if you have trouble trimming your nails or if you cannot see your nails well.

Have a foot care exam by your health care provider each year.

Get Educated:
People at higher risk of foot ulcerations and amputations should receive foot care education on:
- How to avoid foot trauma
- Professionally fitted footwear
- Smoking cessation strategies
- Early referrals to a healthcare professional trained in foot care management, if problems occur.