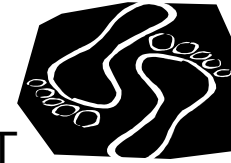


TIPS FOR CARING FOR YOUR FEET



Check your feet. Look for any changes and/or breaks in the skin, such as redness, swelling, broken skin, sores, bleeding, or any unusual feelings such as tingling or numbness. A hand mirror can be useful here, or if that is difficult, another person can check for you. Any such changes can be the early stages of a potentially serious complication, and if noticed, you should make an appointment to see your diabetes health care provider as soon as possible.

Keep your feet clean. It is important to wash your feet with soap and warm water every day; prolonged soaking should be avoided. Also important is to make sure the water is warm - not hot - by checking it with your elbow. Don't check it with your hands and feet because you may not feel the temperature differences accurately enough.

Go soft on your skin. As much as one third of the diabetic population suffers from dry skin on their legs and especially their feet. You may need to apply a moisturizer to your feet every day to prevent them from becoming dry and cracked. Damaged skin can lead to serious problems. If your skin is extremely dry, you may require more specialized treatment.

Avoid the heat. Do not use a heating pad or hot water bottle on your legs or feet for any reason.

Listen to your health care experts. Be sure to stay in contact with the health professionals who make up your health care team. Never use any medication on your feet unless you talk to your health care team first.