

DIABETES and your FEET.

PUT YOU FEET FIRST-PREVENT AMPUTATIONS!!

Every 30sec a lower limb is lost as a consequence of diabetes.

People with diabetes are 25 times more likely to lose a leg than people without the condition. Up to 70% of worldwide leg amputations happen to diabetics.

For every diabetic you meet there is another person who is diabetic but doesn't know it.

All types of diabetes are potentially life-threatening and can reduce your quality of life if not controlled. There is NO such thing as "mild", "not so serious" diabetes.

BUT

Diabetes doesn't kill - IGNORANCE DOES!!!!

It is possible to reduce amputation rates by between 49%-85% through a care strategy that combines PREVENTION, CORRECT SHOEWEAR, EDUCATION, CORRECT FOOTCARE, CLOSE MONITORING & working closely together with the DIABETIC TEAM.

The DIABETIC TEAM that needs to be consulted annually unless otherwise specified by the practitioner:

Diabetic Specialist, Doctor/GP, Diabetic Nurse Educator, Dietician, Podiatrist, Ophthalmologist, Cardiologist, Biokineticist.

What is diabetes and how does it affect my feet???

Diabetes is a chronic condition that arises when the pancreas does not produce enough insulin, or when the body cannot effectively use the insulin produced. Insulin enables the cells to take the glucose from the blood. Insulin acts as a key that opens the cells, so that the glucose can be absorbed and converted into energy. When the body produces no or insufficient insulin or when the insulin produced cannot be used, the glucose levels in the blood rise. (hyperglycaemia)

Raised glucose levels can damage the blood vessels (peripheral vascular disease), the heart, cause small vessel complications of the kidney(nephropathy), eyes(retinopathy) and nerves (neuropathy). Peripheral Vascular disease and neuropathy can both lead to serious foot problems.

Do's, Don't's & Warnings

Things you should always do:

1. Inspect your feet daily for cuts, blisters, bruises or colour changes, swelling, ingrown toenails & open sores. Use a mirror to see the soles of your feet or ask someone to help you.
2. Wear suitable footwear inside and outside the house. Inspect your shoes to make sure there are no stones, sharp objects or rough places inside, before putting them on.
3. Buy new shoes late in the day. This is because your feet become more swollen at the end of the day and you can make sure your shoes are not too tight and fit well.
4. Wearing socks can prevent injury. Make sure they fit well, preferably seamless socks and be very careful that the elastic around the ankle is not too tight. Wear clean dry socks daily.
5. Wash your feet daily with soap & water. Take care to wash between the toes. Make sure the water is not too HOT. Dry your feet carefully, especially between the toes.
6. Moisturise your feet daily with the cream recommended by the podiatrist.

7. Cut toenails STRAIGHT across and file any sharp edges. If you have problems with your eyesight, can't reach your feet, have thickened or ingrown nails consult with your podiatrist.
8. Keep any cuts, wounds or tender spots covered with a clean ***Bactroban ointment*** dressing and consult with the podiatrist.

REMEMBER THAT EVEN IF FOOT PROBLEMS ARE PAINLESS, THEY CAN STILL BE SERIOUS.

Dont's: things you should avoid.

1. Don't walk barefoot inside or outside.
2. Don't wear tight shoes or shoes with rough edges and uneven seams.
3. Don't wear pointy-shoes, high heels, stilettos or shoes that have straps with no back support.
4. Don't wear tight or knee-high socks.
5. ALWAYS check the water first before you bath, shower or wash your feet.
6. Don't let your feet get dried & cracked.
7. Don't use a heater or warm water bottle to warm your feet.
8. Don't smoke or use tobacco products. Smoking damages the blood supply to your feet.
9. Do not use any sharp object, ointment, corn plasters or abrasive file on callouses/ corns. Consult with your podiatrist
10. Don't wear jewellery on your feet.

WARNING: things you should look out for.

1. Your foot becomes painful.
2. Your feet become noticeably red or discoloured.
3. A part or your entire foot becomes unusually hot.
4. There is a discharge of any kind from your foot.
5. Your feet smell bad.
6. Your feet have an open sore or blister.
7. You feel generally unwell with nausea and a high temperature.
8. You have unusual difficulty keeping blood sugar levels under control

