

Diabetic Foot Care

- Do you have feeling of numbness or tingling in your feet?
- Do you get cramps in your calf muscle?
- Do cuts take longer to heal than they used to?

If you have diabetes mellitus and answered 'yes' to any of the above questions, you may be at risk of developing diabetic foot complications. By making a few lifestyle changes and becoming aware of the condition of your feet, you may prevent serious complications.

Diabetic foot complications affect the blood supply to the feet and the nerves. When this occurs, minor problems in your feet can develop into chronic ulcerations, which can result in infection, gangrene or amputation when neglected.

To avoid major complications, preventive foot care is vital. This includes:

- Daily foot inspections
- Daily foot care - wash and dry your feet well, particularly between the toes
- Not using sharp objects (e.g. scissors, blades) on your feet
- Using a moisturiser daily to keep skin supple (do not apply between the toes)
- Having your feet checked annually by a podiatrist, nurse or general practitioner
- Regular foot care education by your doctor, podiatrist or nurse
- Wearing proper shoes at all times - do not go barefoot, even in your home
- Obtain early treatment for any trouble areas



Danger signs to look out for:

- Swelling • Redness • Sudden colour changes • Wounds that do not heal in one week

If you have any concerns, contact your nearest polyclinic or family doctor for an assessment.

Your family doctor will refer you to a podiatrist, if necessary, for a specialised follow-up.

**Interested in a free basic foot screening and foot care advice?
Join us at NUH Diabetes Day on 25 November 2005 (see details on page 3).**