

Foot health – High risk

Podiatry Department

Patient Information Leaflet

What is foot health risk?

This is a measurement of the likelihood that you may develop a serious problem with your feet, such as an ulcer.

To assess this your feet will need to be checked:

- For any hard skin
- For any deformities which might cause extra pressure
- That the circulation to your feet is working adequately
- That the feeling in your feet is not reduced
- For any wounds or signs of infection

Changes can be very gradual, and you may not notice them.

Your screening and assessment have shown that there is a **high risk** that you will develop foot ulcers.

As your feet are at high risk, you will need to take extra care of them. You will need regular treatment by a podiatrist. If you follow the advice and information in this leaflet, it will help you to take care of your feet between visits and will help reduce the risk of any further problems from developing in the future.

What treatment will I receive?

Your Podiatrist will tick which of the following risk factors you have.

- You have lost some feeling in your feet.
- The circulation in your feet is reduced.
- Hard skin/skin changes on your feet.
- The shape of your foot has changed.
- Have had an ulcer or amputation before.
- Renal dialysis
- Other.....

Controlling your diabetes, cholesterol and blood pressure, and having your feet assessed every year by a Podiatrist will help to reduce the risk of developing problems with your feet.

If you smoke, you are strongly advised to stop. Smoking affects your circulation and can lead to amputation.

If there are no immediate problems, you may be seen every 1-3 months for a podiatrist to check your feet and treat any concerns.

If there is a problem with your feet, then you may need to see a podiatrist every 1-2 weeks until the problem is resolved.

Advice on keeping your feet healthy

Check your feet every day

You should check your feet every day for any blisters, breaks in the skin, pain or any signs of infection such as swelling, heat or redness.

Wash your feet every day

You should wash your feet every day in warm water and with a mild soap. Rinse them thoroughly and dry them carefully, especially between the toes.

Do not soak your feet as this can damage your skin.

Moisturise your feet every day

If your skin is dry, apply a moisturising cream every day, avoiding the areas between your toes.

Toenails

Cut or file your toenails regularly, following the curve of the end of your toe.

Use a nail file to make sure that there are no sharp edges which could press into the next toe.

Do not cut down the sides of your nails as you may create a 'spike' of nail which could result in an ingrowing toenail.

Socks, stockings and tights

You should change your socks, stockings or tights every day. They should not have bulky seams and the tops should not be elasticated.

Avoid walking barefoot

If you walk barefoot, you risk injuring your feet by stubbing your toes and standing on sharp objects which can damage the skin

Check your shoes

Check the bottom of your shoes before putting them on to make sure that nothing sharp such as a pin, nail or glass has pierced the outer sole. Also, run your hand inside each shoe to check that no small objects such as small stones have fallen in.

Badly fitting shoes

Badly fitting shoes are a common cause of irritation or damage to feet. The professional who screened your feet may give you advice about the shoes you are wearing and about buying new shoes.

Minor cuts and blisters

If you check your feet and discover any breaks in the skin, minor cuts or blisters, you should cover them with a sterile dressing and check them every day. Do not burst blisters.

If the problems do not heal within a few days, or if you notice any signs of infection (swelling, heat, redness or pain), contact your Podiatry Department or GP.

Over-the-counter corn remedies

Do not use over-the-counter corn remedies. They are not recommended for anyone with diabetes as they can cause damage to the skin that can create problems

Spotting a foot attack

- Is your foot red, warm or swollen?
- Is there a break in the skin or any discharge (or oozing) on to your socks or stockings?
- Do you feel unwell?

You may not have pain even with a visible wound.

Contact your GP, podiatrist or nurse immediately (or a member of the Foot Protection Service). If they are unavailable, go to your nearest out of hours healthcare service or your A&E department.

Specific Advice

If you have any questions, or if there is anything you do not understand about this leaflet, please contact:

Podiatry Department

Call **01384 321427** (9am-5pm, Monday to Friday) or e-mail dgft.podiatry.appointments@nhs.net

This leaflet can be downloaded or printed from:

<http://dgft.nhs.uk/services-and-wards/>

If you have any feedback on this patient information leaflet, please email dgft.patient.information@nhs.net

This leaflet can be made available in large print, audio version and in other languages, please call 0800 073 0510.

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Ulotka dostępna jest również w dużym druku, wersji audio lub w innym języku. W tym celu zadzwoń pod numer 0800 073 0510.

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Aceasta brosură poate fi pusă la dispoziție tipărită cu caractere mari, versiune audio sau în alte limbi, pentru acest lucru va rugăm sunați la 0800 073 0510.

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