

Foot care for children and adolescents with diabetes

Other formats

If you need this information in another format such as audio CD, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, please contact the PALS desk on 01271 314090 or at ndht.pals@nhs.net.

Why is it important to look after my feet?

Our feet help us to get around. It is important to take care of them. Diabetes and high blood sugar levels can damage the blood supply and nerves in our feet, leading to complications in the foot and leg. Not everyone with diabetes will develop a foot problem, but simple steps should be taken to avoid complications. This leaflet provides advice and guidance to help you look after your feet.

If you find a blister, cut, ingrown toenail, or ulcer (wound) on your foot, contact your GP, podiatrist or diabetes clinical nurse specialist immediately.

Check your feet every day

- Check between your toes and the top and bottom of your feet every day
- Look for any cuts or open areas such as a wound, cut, graze or any fluid coming out of the foot
- Cover any open area with a dry sterile dressing and contact the diabetes team or podiatry team



Clean your feet

- Wash your feet with warm, soapy water every day
- Remember to dry between the toes
- After washing your feet, moisturise them to prevent any cracks, using a simple moisturiser
- Never put moisturiser between the toes



Toenails

It is important to cut your toenails regularly to avoid ingrown toenails.

- Always cut the nail straight across. Never cut down the sides.
- Don't cut your nails too short

If you have an ingrown toenail, keep the area covered with a dry sterile dressing and contact the podiatry department or your GP for advice. You may need antibiotics from your GP.

Shoes

Ill-fitting shoes can cause lots of problems to your feet, like blisters and ingrown toenails. Always wear the right shoe for the job.



- Check there is enough of a gap between your longest toe and the end of the shoe. You should be able to press your thumb down at the end of the shoe and not touch your toes
- School shoes should have a good supportive base and a fastening to hold the foot at the back of the shoe
- Sports shoes need to have a fastening and good support to help avoid injury
- Many shoe shops will help measure your feet and shoes to make sure you get the right size
- Keep an eye on any seams in shoes as they may rub and cause blisters or hard skin to develop

Sweaty feet

Excessive sweating of feet can lead to the development of athlete's foot, ingrown toe nails and smelly feet



- Change your socks every day, or more regularly if needed
- Change your socks after sport
- Try not to wear the same pair of shoes all the time to give your shoes time to dry out.
- Bring school P.E. shoes home to dry rather than leaving them in a locker
- Check between the toes for redness or itching

If your feet are itchy or you have a rash, you may have athlete's foot. Contact your GP or pharmacist for advice.

Verrucas

- A verruca is a type wart most commonly found on the feet. They are not always painful but can be easily spread to other people. They usually disappear on their own but this can take time.
- Verrucas are usually found on the sole of the foot
- It may feel like you are walking on a stone, but they are not usually painful unless they are squeezed from the side
- Verrucas can easily spread to other areas and can be very difficult to treat. Most over the counter treatments are not suitable for diabetics.
- Keep the area covered with a sterile dressing to prevent verrucas spreading to others
- Lightly file over any hard skin using a file such as an emery board
- Contact your GP if there are any open areas such as a wound or any fluid coming from the feet.



Going on holiday?

It is easy to forget about your feet on holiday, but remember they need looking after as well.

- Apply sunscreen to your feet
- Check your feet daily for any cuts or breaks in the skin
- Take a first aid kit with you and include some dry sterile dressings in the kit
- Remember to moisturise your feet to prevent any cracks in the skin

What do I do if I have a problem with my feet?

- If you find a cut or a break on the skin of your feet, cover it with a dry sterile dressing
- Never burst a blister
- If your feet swell, become red, painful or have pus coming out, inform your GP, diabetic nurse or podiatrist



Further information

North Devon Podiatry Services

Email: ndht.podiatry@nhs.net

Tel: 01271 341509

Address: North Devon Podiatry Services, Barnstaple Health Centre, Vicarage Street, Barnstaple, North Devon, EX32 7BH

Children and Young Person's Diabetes Service

Email: ndht.cypdiabetes@nhs.net

Tel: 01271 314106 / 07884266159 / 07920235237

Address: North Devon District Hospital, Raleigh Park, Barnstaple, North Devon, EX31 4JB

www.feetforlife.org

www.diabetes.org.uk

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern call 01271 314090 or email ndht.pals@nhs.net. You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

Have your say

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

'Care Opinion' comments forms are on all wards or online at www.careopinion.org.uk.

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust
Raleigh Park, Barnstaple
Devon EX31 4JB
Tel. 01271 322577
www.northdevonhealth.nhs.uk

© Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust
This leaflet was designed by the Communications Department.
Tel: 01271 313970 / email: ndht.contactus@nhs.net