

# diabetes and how to care for your feet



Wear socks with your shoes. This helps stop blisters. Change your socks daily. Choose socks that are not too tight. Check that the seams don't rub and that there are no holes in them.



Protect your feet. Avoid going barefoot, even at home. Always wear shoes, sandals or slippers that fit well. Choose shoes that fit correctly, and with no rough seams or areas that rub. Before you put your shoes on look inside and check that there is nothing in them that could hurt your foot. Your podiatrist can give you tips on choosing the best footwear.

Make sure your doctor or nurse checks your feet when you have your diabetes check-up.

Looking after your feet every day helps keep them healthy. Good foot care, managing your blood glucose levels, eating healthy, keeping active and stopping smoking can all help stop foot problems and leg amputations.

Visit your podiatrist regularly and have your feet checked by your doctor or nurse at your next visit, even if you are visiting for a different reason.



**Diabetes New Zealand Inc.**  
PO Box 12441, Wellington 6144  
**Phone 0800 369 636**  
**Visit [www.diabetes.org.nz](http://www.diabetes.org.nz)**

March 2013 © Diabetes New Zealand Inc.



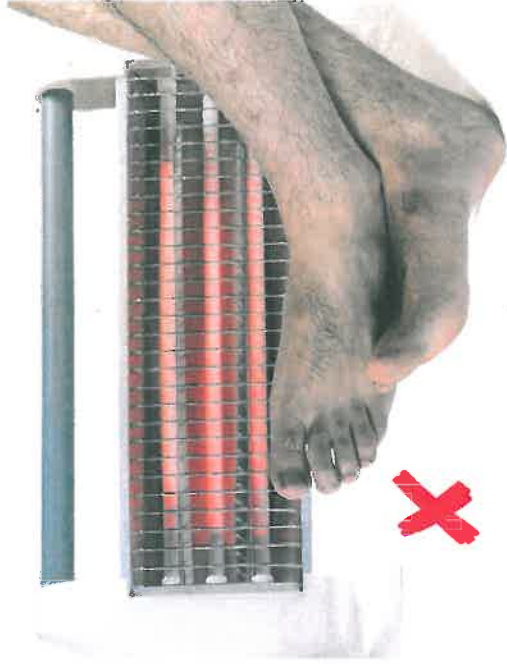
# diabetes and how to care for your feet

High blood glucose levels can damage your blood vessels and the nerves to your feet. This can cause poor blood flow and loss of feeling (neuropathy) in your feet. This means that you don't feel pain so you don't notice when you have hurt your foot. It can lead to sores that are hard to heal and may lead to amputation.

The good news is that many of these foot problems can be avoided by daily foot care. Follow these steps to help prevent foot problems.



Dry your feet and don't forget between your toes. If your skin is dry, apply a moisturising cream daily, but not between the toes. This can increase chances of tinea (athlete's foot).



Be careful with heaters and hotwater bottles – if you have loss of feeling it could cause you to burn your feet and not realise. Hot water could burn your feet too – always check the temperature with your elbow before you get in a hot bath.



Wash your feet every day.



Check your feet daily. Use a mirror or ask someone to help. Look for changes to your skin. Cover any cuts or blisters and change the plaster each day. If it does not start healing or gets red or sore or smells see a doctor straight away.



Cut toenails straight across and do not make them too short. File sharp edges. Nails are easier to cut after being washed.