

# The Power to Save Your Feet is in Your Hands

The sooner treatment begins, the greater the chances your feet will last a lifetime. Follow these recommendations carefully and bring even minor, unhealed foot irritations to the attention of your doctor, without delay.



**Wash your feet every day with mild soap and lukewarm water.** Test the water temperature first with your elbow to ensure it is not too hot. Do not soak your feet. Soaking can cause your skin to dry and crack. Dry your feet gently, especially between the toes. Keep skin from cracking by using moisturizing lotion daily on dry skin.

**Check your feet every day.** Inspect the tops and bottoms of your feet. If you cannot see the bottoms of your feet, use a mirror. Check for scratches, cracks, cuts or blisters, especially between the toes and around the heel. Check for ingrown toenails, corns, calluses and sores. Note changes in colour, temperature or shape.

**Protect your feet.** Do not walk barefoot, even indoors. Break in new shoes slowly, wearing them for only one or two hours at a time. Always wear clean socks that are made of natural fibre (such as cotton) with your shoes. Socks should not be too tight around the foot or ankle and should have smooth seams.

**Take care of your toenails.** See your footcare service provider regularly for necessary trimming and other appropriate care.

**Keep your blood flowing.** Avoid wearing tight garters or socks. If you smoke, try to quit. Smoking decreases blood flow to the feet.





## Diabetic Foot Facts

- Diabetes affects about 5% of the world population. More people in Canada
- Up to five percent of all people with diabetes currently have a foot problem
- Foot complication is the number one cause of hospital admissions for diabetics
- One in six people with diabetes will develop an ulceration in their life time
- Most (85% +) amputations begin with ulceration
- Almost half (43%) of all people with diabetes have their first hospital admission associated with a foot ulceration and/or infection
- Up to 70% of all amputations are related to diabetes
- Those with diabetes are up to 40 times more likely to suffer an amputation
- Every 30 seconds a leg is lost to diabetes somewhere in the world
- Mortality rate is highest post ulceration or amputation

## Symptoms present in more than 60% all longstanding people with diabetes

- Sensation loss: unable to feel pain related to an undetected injury
- Circulation loss: a 70-year-old person with diabetes has 70 times increased chance for gangrene due to circulation loss compared to a non-diabetic of the same age and—if also a smoker—has 200 times increased chance for gangrene

