

# Foot health - Moderate (increased) 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 be checked for the following things:

- For any hard skin
- For 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 **moderate (increased) risk** that you will develop foot ulcers.

## 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.
- The shape of your foot has changed.
- 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.

You may be seen every 3-6 months for your feet to be checked over by a podiatrist and any concerns treated.

You will be encouraged to monitor and look after your feet between appointments and if you have any concerns, you can contact the podiatry department for advice.

If you follow the advice and information in this leaflet, it will help you to take care of your feet between visits to your podiatrist. Hopefully this will help reduce the risk of any further problems from developing in the future.

## 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

### **Avoid high or low temperatures**

If your feet are cold, wear socks. Never sit with your feet in front of the fire to warm them up. Always remove hot water bottles and turn off electric blanket before getting into bed.

### **Further information**

Podiatrists may work with other departments and health professionals to get the best solution for your problem and may refer you to other services for further tests and treatments if we feel that this will help improve your foot health.

We encourage everyone to monitor their foot health regularly (daily if you are moderate or high risk) and contact your GP (or podiatry service if you are already a patient) if you notice any changes or problems, especially anything that is red, hot, swollen, weeping or bleeding.

Your needs may change over time and your podiatrist will assess this each time they see you to offer the most appropriate treatment at that time.

### **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**

**01384 321427** (9am-5pm, Monday to Friday)

**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](mailto: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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