

LIVING WELL WITH **DIABETES**

LOOKING AFTER YOUR FEET

Elevated blood glucose levels (BGLs) over time can cause damage to the circulation and nerves in the feet.

Often there are no symptoms of this damage, although some people may experience:

- Numbness, pain, tingling or a burning sensation in the feet
- poor healing of wounds
- foot deformities
- pain in the calves with exercise
- abnormal sweating of the feet and lower legs
- dry skin on feet and lower legs
- dry and cracked skin on heels
- formation of calluses on feet.



DIABETES
AUSTRALIA
New South Wales

For further information call

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Many potential problems are avoidable by checking your feet daily, wearing appropriate footwear and seeing a podiatrist regularly.

Foot care

- Look at your feet everyday. Make sure you inspect between the toes and the soles of your feet. If you have difficulty seeing your feet, use a small mirror or have someone else inspect them
- check for any changes in your feet. Look for redness, swelling, cuts, blisters, skin colour, cracks, corns or calluses
- wash and dry your feet well. Making sure that you dry between the toes
- apply moisturiser to avoid dryness (avoid putting moisturiser between the toes)
- cut toenails straight across and gently file sharp edges
- if you have problems reaching your toenails or trouble cutting your nails, see a podiatrist
- keep away from direct heat, such as heaters, hot water bottles and electric blankets
- don't use corn or wart cures or foot powders
- See a podiatrist to treat corns and callus.

Footwear

- Check your shoes before wearing them for stones or rough seams
- wear new shoes in gradually, for short periods at a time
- wear well fitting and supportive shoes to protect your feet
- wear socks and stockings that don't restrict the blood supply. Avoid garters. Choose socks that are made of natural or breathable fibres
- buy new shoes in the afternoon as feet tend to swell during the day
- see a podiatrist for footwear advice.

It is recommended that people with diabetes see a podiatrist at least every six months. Make sure you report any changes or problems with your feet immediately to your doctor or podiatrist.

Looking after your diabetes can prevent or delay complications, including damage to the feet.