

Minor cuts and blisters

If you check your feet and discover any breaks in the skin, minor cuts or blisters, cover them with a sterile dressing. Do **not** burst blisters. Contact your GP or podiatry department immediately (our contact number is on the front of this leaflet).

Hard skin and corns

Do not attempt to remove hard skin or corns yourself. Your podiatrist will provide treatment and advice where necessary.

Over-the-counter corn remedies

Never use over-the-counter corn remedies. They are not recommended for anyone with diabetes as they can damage the skin and create ulcers.

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 or heating pads from your bed before getting in.

If you discover any problems with your feet, contact your podiatry department (our contact number is on the front of this leaflet) or GP for advice immediately.

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Moderate Risk

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If you discover any problems with your feet, contact your Podiatry Department or GP immediately. If they are not available, go to your nearest accident and emergency department. Remember, any delay in getting advice or treatment when you have a problem can lead to more serious problems.

Individual advice

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Equality Statement

At South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust we are fully committed to equality and diversity, both as an employer and as a service provider. We have a policy statement in our Equality Strategy that clearly outlines our commitment to equality for service users, patients and staff:

You and your family have the right to be treated fairly and be routinely involved in decisions about your treatment and care. You can expect to be treated with dignity and respect. You will not be discriminated against on any grounds including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

You have a responsibility to treat other service users, patients and our staff with dignity and respect

Our information for patients can also be made available in other languages, Braille, audio tape, disc or in large print.

PALS

We offer a Patient Advice Liaison Service (PALS). This is a confidential service for families to help with any questions or concerns about local health services.

You can contact the service by the direct telephone line on 01926 600 054 by email: Pals@swft.nhs.uk or by calling in person to the PALS Office which is located in the Lakin Road Entrance of Warwick Hospital.

South Warwickshire **NHS**

NHS Foundation Trust

Podiatry Department

Advice about your moderate risk foot. Diabetes information and advice leaflet.

Name:

NHS No:

**Podiatry Single Point of Access
Telephone: 01926 600810**

Lines open 9am to 4pm Monday to Friday

E-mail: podiatryreferrals@swft.nhs.uk

Diabetes is a lifelong condition, which can cause foot problems. Some of these problems can occur because the nerves and blood vessels supplying your feet are damaged. This can affect:

- ❖ the feeling in your feet (peripheral neuropathy); and
- ❖ the circulation in your feet (ischaemia)

These changes can be very gradual and you may not notice them. This is why it is essential you receive a foot screening and assessment from a podiatrist or suitably trained health professional every year. You can then agree a treatment plan to suit your needs.

Your screening and assessment have shown that there is a **moderate risk** that you will develop foot ulcers. 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.
- You have hard skin on your feet.
- The shape of your foot has changed.
- Your vision is impaired.
- You cannot look after your feet yourself.

Controlling your diabetes, cholesterol and blood pressure and having your feet screened and assessed every year, will help to reduce the risk of developing more problems with your feet.

If you smoke you are strongly advised to stop. Smoking affects your circulation and can lead to amputation.

If you drink alcohol, it is advisable to keep this within recommended limits. If you require further advice discuss this with your podiatrist or GP.

As your feet are at **moderate risk** of developing ulcers, you will need to take extra care of them. You may need treatment by a podiatrist or podiatry assistant.

If you follow the advice and information in this leaflet, it will help you to take care of your feet between visits to reduce problems 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. If you cannot do this yourself, ask your partner or carer to help you.

Wash your feet every day

You should wash your feet every day in warm water and with mild soap. Rinse them thoroughly and dry them carefully, especially between the toes. Do not soak your feet as this can damage your skin. Because of your diabetes, you may not be able to feel hot and cold very well. You should test the temperature of the water with your elbow, or ask someone else to test the temperature for you.

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, as advised by your podiatrist 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 ingrown toenail.

Socks, stocking 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 everyday

Check the bottom of the 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 podiatrist who assessed your feet may give you advice about the shoes you are wearing and advise you on buying new shoes. They may suggest that you are measured for special shoes you can get on prescription.