

## PATIENT INFORMATION



FROM  
YOUR DOCTOR

# Stopping foot ulcers before they start

For people with diabetes, the importance of proper foot care can't be emphasized enough. Foot ulcers must be prevented because they can do a great deal of damage to your foot and leg, and land you in the hospital. Your chances of developing an ulcer will be greatly reduced if you—or those caring for you—practice prevention every day.

### Choosing the right footwear

- Select shoes that provide cushioning and support.
- Always wear clean cotton or wool socks. White socks are preferable because it's easier to see any stains on them that might tip you off to an injury.
- Change your shoes and socks every 3-4 hours—the amount of time it takes for most footwear to lose some of its cushioning and support. Check your feet for cracking, drying, or other problems during each change.

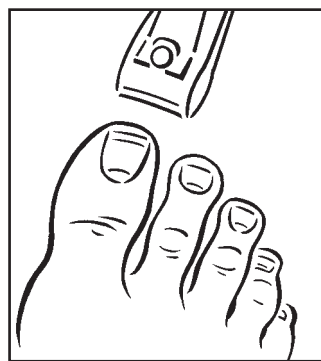
### Skin-care tips



- Apply a moisturizing cream to your feet every day. Eucerin and Nivea are particularly good.
- Don't leave any excess cream between the toes because the extra moisture can lead to an infection.
- Never soak your feet. That weakens the skin and makes it prone to infections. Soaking can also spread an existing infection or make it more difficult for an ulcer to heal. Soaking can cause severe burns if the water is too hot but diabetes has made it hard for you to feel when damage is being done.
- Never walk barefoot, either indoors or outdoors.

### Proper toenail care

- Trim your toenails regularly—always cutting them straight across—to keep them from growing into the skin and causing an infection.
- Don't trim your toenails at home if they're thickened because of an infection or for other reasons. Instead, have them trimmed by a foot doctor (podiatrist).



ILLUSTRATIONS: KATHERINE BORN

**patient  
care**

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