

DiABETES UK
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WHAT TO EXPECT

AT YOUR

ANNUAL FOOT CHECK

If you have diabetes and are older than 12 years old, this leaflet is for you.

We know that people with diabetes have a much greater risk of developing problems with their feet, due to the damage raised blood sugars can cause to sensation and circulation. So keep an eye on your feet at home and make sure that you get a quality foot check from a properly trained person at least once a year. This check usually takes place at your GP surgery as part of your diabetes annual review. It's a very important part of your diabetes care – **if you haven't received your annual foot check, make sure you ask your GP!**

This leaflet will give you information about what you can expect at your foot check – and space to record your results.

MY RESULTS

Date of foot check:

My risk of foot problems: **Low** **Moderate/Increased** **High**

Do I need to be referred to a specialist for expert advice? **Yes** or **No**

If you have not been given this information, ask for it!



CHECKLIST

An annual foot check should involve the following:

- You should be asked to remove any footwear, including socks/stockings.
- Your feet should be examined – including looking for corns, calluses and changes in shape.
- Your feet should be tested for numbness or changes in sensation ('neuropathy') with a tuning fork or a fine plastic strand called a monofilament.
- You should be asked questions about your feet and diabetes management, including:
 - Have you noticed any problems or changes (eg cuts, blisters, broken skin or corns)?
 - Have you had any previous foot problems or wounds?
 - Have you experienced any pain or discomfort?
 - How often do you check your feet, and what do you look for?
 - Do you have any cramp-like pains when walking?
 - How well are you managing your diabetes?
- Your footwear should also be examined to make sure it is not causing any problems to your feet.
- At the end of the foot check, you should be told the results and your level of risk of foot problems.
- You should be given information about what your level of risk means and what to do next, including:
 - advice about how to care for your feet – according to your level of risk
 - an agreed management/treatment plan
 - emergency contact details
 - referral to Foot Protection Service when appropriate.

WHEN CARING FOR YOUR FEET, WHAT SORT OF PROBLEMS SHOULD YOU LOOK OUT FOR?

Damage to your nerves might be indicated by:

- tingling sensation; pins and needles
- pain (burning)
- sweating less
- feet that are red and hot to touch
- changes to the shape of your feet
- hard skin
- loss of feeling in your feet/legs.

Damage to your blood supply might be indicated by:

- cramp in your calves (at rest or when walking)
- shiny smooth skin
- loss of hair on your legs and feet
- cold, pale feet
- changes in the skin colour of your feet
- wounds or sores that do not heal
- pain in your foot/feet
- swollen feet.

If you notice any of these things, or have concerns about your feet, tell your GP or diabetes team – do not wait until your annual foot check!

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND ADVICE

Go to www.diabetes.org.uk/putting-feet-first
Call **0345 123 2399*** Monday–Friday, 9am–7pm
Email careline@diabetes.org.uk

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