

The Podiatrist's role in your foot care:

Podiatrists are also known as Chiropodists. All Podiatrists employed within the NHS require to be registered and have Podiatry to Diploma or Degree level. The term Podiatrist is being used more widely now and is the title adopted internationally for a specialist in disorders and conditions of the foot.

Your Podiatrist will examine your feet for any signs or symptoms of abnormality or diabetic foot disease. How often this is carried out depends very much on your individual assessment. Prevention of foot problems is important and your Podiatrist will provide or refer you on for treatment if this is needed.

They will also provide advice that will help you to look after your feet and prevent foot problems. Your podiatrist will discuss your foot health needs with you and this will include how often your feet should be examined.

We need to work with you in partnership to ensure that we do our best to keep your feet healthy.

Specific advice about your nail care:

Your next foot assessment is due:

LOCAL CONTACT NUMBERS

Podiatry Department: 01851 70 8285

GP Practice:



Looking after your Feet

**Diabetes
Risk 3**

(High Risk)

Diabetes is a lifelong disease that can cause problems with your feet.

Screening today has shown your feet are in the **high-risk** category for developing foot problems. This could be because you have one or more of the following signs or symptoms:

- ❑ Loss of sensation (**neuropathy**)
- ❑ Reduced circulation (peripheral arterial disease - **PAD**)
- ❑ Hard skin (callus)
- ❑ Foot deformity

You might also be considered to be at **high risk** of developing foot problems if you have a history of:

- ❑ Foot ulcers
- ❑ Infection
- ❑ Amputation

Keeping your diabetes well controlled and making sure that you have your feet checked regularly by a podiatrist will help to keep your feet healthy. The advice and information in this leaflet will help you and/or your carer to look after your feet well.

Check your feet every day

It is important that you check your feet every day for anything that is different. Are there any sores, redness or swelling? Ask your carer to check your feet daily if you can't inspect your feet yourself. A mirror placed on the ground will help you to see the soles of your feet.

Keep your feet clean by washing them every day. If your skin is dry, use a good moisturising cream regularly.

Neuropathy

This can make your feet numb and means you can damage your feet without being aware of it. If you have lost the feeling in your feet never walk around without your shoes on and always check your footwear for any rough areas or loose objects before you put them on.

It is possible to burn your skin without knowing if your feet are numb. Check the temperature of your bath with your elbow or a bath thermometer and be careful when sitting near fires.

Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD)

Poor circulation is due to the narrowing of the arteries in your feet and legs. It may be painful especially when walking uphill or at night-time. If your skin is injured it can take a longer time to heal if you have poor circulation. Smoking can make your circulation worse therefore it is important that you keep this in mind. Advice and support to stop smoking is available from your GP practice.



Callus

The presence of hard skin (callus and corns) may be an indication that there are areas of high pressure on your feet. Changes in the shape and pressure distribution in your feet means that you are more likely to develop callus and corns.

Your podiatrist may provide you with an insole or replaceable device to help reduce the pressure from these areas.

Footwear

Shoes are a common cause of damage to feet as you may not feel them rubbing. Always wear well-fitting shoes with soft uppers (preferably leather) and with a strap or lace to hold your foot securely in the shoe. Have your feet measured for new shoes and ensure they are the right length and that they are deep and wide enough at the toe area. If you have been issued with special footwear, it is important that you only wear these shoes.

Contact your podiatrist, GP or someone from your diabetes care team right away if you notice anything unusual or different about your feet e.g.

- If you find a cut or break in the skin doesn't start to heal within a few days
- If any part of your foot or leg becomes red, hot, painful or swollen
- If you discover fluid oozing from under hard skin or from a toenail
- If you get flu like symptoms that could suggest infection