

DIABETIC FOOT HEALTH

Diabetes can have a terrible effect on one's feet. It can reduce circulation and lead to lack of feeling or numbness in the feet and ankles. These factors combined with the pressures of standing and walking, create a high risk for foot wounds (called ulcers) and foot infections. These complications of diabetes can lead to loss of limb and even loss of life, so it is essential that the diabetic patient take care of his/her feet and regularly follow up with a podiatrist.

There are some simple steps that the diabetic patient can take to protect the feet. These include:

- Inspect your feet daily - look for blisters, cuts, swelling, redness, or toenail problems. If you see problems, contact Dr. Shipley.
- Don't walk around barefoot, even at home
- Don't trim your toenails, corns, or calluses - let your doctor do it.
- Apply a thin coat of moisturizing cream (such as Amerigel) twice daily to your feet. Don't apply between the toes!
- Check your shoes before putting them on - make sure no rocks or debris are in them.
- Avoid hot and cold temperatures applied to your feet (careful with hot bath water!)
- Quit smoking - smoking increases the chance of poor circulation by five times.
- Keep your blood sugars under control
- Have your feet examined periodically