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**DIABETES AND YOUR FEET**

Diabetes may cause several changes which can have an impact on your feet making you more prone to problems. It is important to be aware of these changes, the impact they can have and the things you should do to keep your feet as healthy as possible.

**Things to look out for:**

* **Numbness / pins and needles / tingling could suggest changes to the nerves**
* **Cramping in legs and feet when walking causing you to stop / start**
* **Pain and cramping at night**
* **Excessive dryness of skin with cracking**
* **Itchiness, flaking and redness of the skin**
* **Changes in skin colour and texture**
* **Any breaks or abrasions to the skin**
* **Any signs of infection- redness / swelling / pain / any pus or redness spreading up your toes / feet**

Diabetes can affect the small blood vessels that lead to the eyes, kidneys and nerve endings in the hands and feet. If the nerve endings are affected this can lead to lack of sensation (both pressure and pain). It can also affect the sweat glands leading to very dry feet or excessive sweating.

Diabetes can also affect the larger blood vessels including the ones that lead down to our feet- this can mean blood flow to our feet can be affected and may make your feet more difficult to heal.

Changing blood sugar levels caused by diabetes can affect the natural balance on our skin and make you more prone to infection.

If you have any of the above or any other concerns, it is important to consult with your Podiatrist who can assess the situation as quickly as possible and provide the appropriate advice / treatment as required.

The role of the Podiatrist in your diabetic foot care is extremely important. At least once a year (or as often as required) we will carry out a diabetic screening on your feet, sending a copy to your GP as well as keeping one for our records to monitor the health of your feet.

**Your diabetic screening here at
Walsh Podiatry:**

* **Assessment of circulation and sensation**
* **Quality and rhythm of pulses assessed using a special instrument called a Doppler**
* **Assessment of microcirculation (the small blood vessels that supply the skin and nails)**
* **Assessment of the different branches of peripheral nervous system: vibration, pressure and pain / sharp sensation**
* **Expert advice given**

***\*\* This assessment is completed annually and a report is sent to your GP.
This screening allows us to monitor your feet \*\****

In combination with diabetic screening, regular foot care in our Podiatry clinic is very important to allow us early recognition of any problems that may arise that we can then deal with quickly. It also allows us to provide you with the appropriate advice of how to care for your feet in-between your appointments. We can also check that you are wearing the appropriate hosiery and footwear. We also stock hosiery and footwear by Dr Comfort that are designed especially for the diabetic foot. We can measure, order and fit you for this specialist footwear if required.

**Looking after your feet**

* Regular maintenance from a Podiatrist who can provide safe treatment for you
* Follow any advice given to you about how to look after your skin and nails
* Wash your feet daily but take care to dry well in-between your toes
* Regular emollient use as if the skin gets too dry it can crack and possibly lead to infections. You should apply this all over the tops and bottoms of your feet but **not** in-between your toes as this causes excess moisture which can lead to splits in the skin and infections.
**We recommend the use of CCS cream.**
* Treatment of fungal skin infections if they arise (**our Podiatrists can recommend the best treatment option for you**)
* **Do not** walk around barefoot - if you have a lack of sensation this could mean potentially injuring your feet and not being aware
* Regularly check footwear in case of foreign objects / loose threads
* Use a mirror (or ask a friend / partner or family member) to see the soles of your feet to check for any cuts, abrasions or redness
* Dress any cuts or abrasions you may get with a sterile dressing and contact us if you are concerned
* Wear well-fitting footwear. **We can measure, order and fit you for Dr Comfort or Wider Fit shoes**
* Wear well-fitting hosiery / socks. **Bamboo** is good as it is antibacterial and thermo-regulating so helps to keep your feet warm in the Winter and cool in the Summer