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Appendix 13

Diabetes and Foot Care: A Checklist

DO:

- check your feet every day for cuts, cracks, bruises, blisters, sores, infections or unusual markings.
- use a mirror to see the bottom of your feet if you can't lift them up.
- check the colour of your legs and feet. If there is swelling, warmth or redness or if you have pain, see your doctor or foot specialist right away.
- clean a cut or scratch with a mild soap and water and cover with a dry dressing for sensitive skin.
- trim your nails straight across.
- wash and dry your feet every day, especially between the toes.
- apply a good skin lotion every day on your heels and soles. Wipe off any excess lotion.
- change your socks every day.
- wear a good supportive shoe.
- wear professionally fitted shoes from a reputable store; professionally fitted orthotics may help.
- choose shoes with low heels (under 5 cm high).
- buy shoes in the late afternoon (since your feet swell slightly by then).
- avoid extreme cold and heat (including the sun).
- exercise regularly.
- see a foot care specialist if you need advice or treatment.

DO NOT:

- cut your own corns or calluses.
- treat your own in-grown toenails or slivers with a razor or scissors; see your physician/nurse practitioner or foot care specialist.
- use over-the-counter medications to treat corns and warts. They are dangerous for people with diabetes.
- apply heat to your feet with a hot water bottle or electric blanket; you could burn your feet without realizing it.
- soak your feet.
- take very hot baths.
- use lotion between your toes.
- walk barefoot inside or outside.
- wear tight socks, garters or elastics, or knee highs.
- wear over-the-counter insoles – they can cause blisters if they are not right for your feet.
- sit for long periods of time.
- smoke.