

The British Chiropody Association

Berkshire



Maidenhead

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FOOTCARE FOR DIABETIC PATIENTS

As a diabetic patient, you should know the importance of paying special attention to your feet with regard to cleanliness. The cutting of nails, the type of shoe, the hosiery that you wear and other matters concerning care of your feet.

Set out below are important routines to be observed when you are checking your feet each day.

NAILS

You are advised to use a special pair of nail-clippers for cutting toenails: ordinary hand nail-clippers are generally inadequate, since toenails are much thicker than finger nails.

A good time to cut the nails is immediately after you have either washed your feet or taken a bath.

Always use the points of the nail-clippers for guiding your cutting, and make certain that you cut straight across the top of the nail. Do not under any circumstances cut your nails too short, and you should never cut the corners of your nails so short that you cut back into the nail groove. Never probe the nail groove or indeed any part of that area.

If you do experience problems in cutting your toenails or you suffer any pain, consult your chiropodist.

CORNS AND CALLUSES

It is most important that corns or calluses, or any other foot conditions, should be treated by a chiropodist. Chiropodists who are members of the British Chiropody Association are qualified to high standards and can be recognised by the letters MBChA after their names.

WASHING AND DRYING YOUR FEET

Wash your feet regularly each day in warm water: the water should be neither too hot nor too cold, an ordinary mild baby soap is excellent for the purpose. Rinse the skin well and gently pat dry around and between the toes with a soft towel or tissue. A little surgical spirit is helpful.

GENERAL DO'S AND DON'TS

Avoid extremes of heat, particularly in baths: bath water should be just comfortable and you should not soak in it. The water temperature should not exceed 110° Fahrenheit, and to test this it is more reliable to use a thermometer than to test it with your arm or hand. As you may know, with your condition your reaction to extremes of temperature might not be as good as is normal.

Avoid hot water bottles: if you use an electric blanket, be sure to remove it before you get into bed. By all means wear thick socks or hose in bed, but be sure that they are not tight. Avoid lengthy exposure to dampness or cold.

If your skin is dry, then gently massage a little light olive oil into the skin after bathing your feet avoid rubbing hard. If your skin is moist, ensure that you keep it clean by swabbing it with surgical spirit, especially between the toes, and then dry it with a good Quality baby talcum powder.

To separate closely overlapping toes, wind them in loose strands of lambswool, but remember that lambswool is liable to shrinkage and therefore, it is recommended that you place a ballpoint pen or some similar item in position and wrap the lambswool around both the toe and the pen. When you remove the pen, the wool is bound loosely enough to allow for shrinkage.

Never use any strong antiseptic solution such as iodine or any so called 'corn-cures'. Many of these 'corn-cures' contain a corrosive substance which will damage normal healthy skin the risk to your own skin is obviously far greater.

Avoid using adhesive strapping directly over a wound. In the event of a minor injury, apply a mild antiseptic solution or Savlon and use ordinary sterilized gauze to cover the wound. Be sure to use an antiseptic solution, and make sure that you always use clean and sterile gauze.

Do watch your feet for any sign of changes. You should seek professional advice from your chiropodist if you notice any pain in your feet, particularly from swellings; or if you find fluid seeping from a break or crack in the skin or beneath a corn or toenail; or if you notice any change in the tissue or colour of your lower limbs.

A feature of your condition is that you may not feel pain or cold as well as other people. For this reason, it is important that you take great care of your feet and make sure that they are not affected, since you rely upon them so much. If in doubt at any time, consult a qualified chiropodist. If you are uncertain where to find a qualified chiropodist in your area, check your local telephone directories or the box in the Yellow Pages headed 'British Chiropody Association'.

Alternatively contact:

The Secretary of the British Chiropody Association
The New Hall, Bath Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire, U.K. Telephone:
(01628) 632440

who will be pleased to supply you with a list of Qualified chiropodists in your area.

Always consult a qualified chiropodist. Look for the letters MSSCh (or FSSCh), MBChA.

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