



Preventing Diabetic Foot Ulcers: 10 Steps to Protect Your Feet Every Day

If you have diabetes, taking care of your feet is one of the most important things you can do to protect your health.

For many people living with diabetes, a small blister, cut, or callus may seem like a minor inconvenience. But because diabetes can affect circulation and reduce feeling in your feet, even a small wound can become a serious problem if it goes unnoticed or untreated.

The good news is that many diabetic foot ulcers are preventable. A few simple daily habits can go a long way toward protecting your feet and maintaining your mobility.

Why Are People with Diabetes at Higher Risk?

Diabetes can affect your body in several ways that make healing more difficult.

Over time, high blood sugar may:

- Reduce blood flow to the feet
- Damage nerves (called diabetic neuropathy)
- Make it harder for your body to fight infection
- Slow the healing process

Because of these changes, injuries may not heal as quickly—and sometimes people don't even realize they've been injured.

That's why prevention is so important.

1. Check Your Feet Every Day

The first step in preventing foot ulcers is simply paying attention.

Take a few moments each day to inspect both feet, including:

- The tops of your feet
- Between your toes
- Around your heels
- The bottoms of your feet (using a mirror if needed)

Look for:

- Cuts
- Blisters
- Redness
- Swelling
- Cracks in the skin
- Drainage
- Calluses
- Changes in skin color

If you have trouble seeing your feet, ask a family member or caregiver to help.

2. Wash and Dry Your Feet Carefully

Good hygiene helps protect your skin.

Wash your feet daily with warm—not hot—water and mild soap.

After washing:

- Dry thoroughly, especially between the toes.
- Apply moisturizer to dry skin, but avoid putting lotion between your toes, where excess moisture can increase the risk of infection.

Healthy skin is your body's first line of defense.

3. Wear Shoes That Fit Properly

Ill-fitting shoes are one of the most common causes of diabetic foot injuries.

Choose shoes that:

- Fit comfortably
- Have adequate toe room
- Provide support
- Protect your feet from injury

Before putting on your shoes, check inside for small objects, rough seams, or debris that could cause irritation.

4. Never Walk Barefoot

Even around your own home, walking barefoot increases the risk of cuts, punctures, burns, and other injuries.

Because diabetic neuropathy can reduce sensation, you may not realize you've injured your foot until the wound has already worsened.

Wear supportive shoes or slippers whenever you're walking.

5. Manage Your Blood Sugar

One of the best ways to protect your feet is by managing your diabetes.

Keeping your blood sugar within your target range can help:

- Improve circulation
- Support healing
- Reduce nerve damage
- Lower the risk of infection

Foot health begins with overall diabetes management.

6. Trim Your Nails Carefully

Keeping your toenails trimmed can help prevent ingrown nails and injuries.

Cut nails straight across and avoid trimming too short.

If you have poor vision, difficulty reaching your feet, or significant nerve damage, ask a healthcare professional to assist with nail care.

7. Don't Ignore Corns or Calluses

Many people try to remove corns or calluses themselves using sharp tools or over-the-counter products.

For people living with diabetes, this can lead to skin injuries and infection.

Instead, ask your healthcare provider or podiatrist about the safest way to manage these areas.

8. Stay Active

Regular movement improves circulation, which helps deliver oxygen and nutrients to your feet.

Talk with your healthcare provider about activities that are appropriate for you.

Even moderate activity can support both your overall health and your foot health.

9. Don't Wait to Report Changes

If you notice a blister, cut, redness, swelling, or drainage, don't assume it will heal on its own.

Early treatment can often prevent a small problem from becoming a much larger one.

The sooner changes are evaluated, the more treatment options are typically available.

10. Schedule Regular Foot Exams

Even if your feet feel fine, regular foot examinations are an important part of diabetes care.

Your healthcare provider can identify problems that may not yet be causing symptoms and help you reduce your risk of future complications.

Preventive care is one of the most effective tools for protecting your feet.

When Should You Seek Immediate Care?

Contact your healthcare provider promptly if you notice:

- A wound that isn't healing

- Increasing redness or warmth
- Swelling
- Drainage
- A foul odor
- Skin turning dark or black
- Fever or chills
- Sudden changes in the appearance of your foot

These may be signs that your wound requires immediate medical attention.

Protecting Your Feet Protects Your Independence

Your feet carry you through everyday life. Taking a few minutes each day to care for them can help reduce your risk of ulcers, infection, hospitalization, and even amputation.

Remember, prevention isn't about doing one big thing—it's about consistently doing the small things that protect your health over time.

Partnering with You Every Step of the Way

At Aetherus Wound & Lymphatics, we believe the best treatment is often prevention. Whether you're managing diabetes, recovering from a wound, or simply want to stay ahead of potential complications, our team is here to support you with compassionate, personalized care.

If you've noticed a wound that isn't healing, changes in your feet, or have concerns about your risk of developing a diabetic foot ulcer, don't wait to seek help.

Early intervention can make all the difference—and we're here to help you protect your health, your mobility, and your quality of life.