

---

# Caring for your feet

## For people with reduced circulation and/or diabetes

If the bloodflow (circulation) in your leg(s) is poor, the ability of the foot to heal after any injury is reduced and your resistance to infection is weaker. This is usually the result of hardened arteries (called atherosclerosis).

If you have diabetes, the nerves to your feet can be affected, which can lead to you having reduced sensation. This can prevent the normal protective responses of the feet to excessive pressure and rubbing, and can lead eventually to severe damage to the feet.

For these reasons, it is important that patients with poor circulation and/or diabetes take special care of their feet.

## How to prevent serious infections and injury to your feet

- Wear shoes and do not walk barefoot, which will prevent many cuts and injuries.
- Wash your feet daily with warm (but not hot) water, which will prevent many infections.
- Dry your feet carefully after a bath or shower, especially between the toes.
- Regularly check your feet and toes for cracks in the skin or blisters. Don't forget the soles of your feet. If it is difficult for you to see the sole of your foot, ask someone to help you.
- Wear shoes that fit you well; don't wear shoes that are too tight or too loose.
- Wear new shoes only for short periods initially, until they are softer and you are used to them.
- Do not 'toast your feet' close to fires or radiators, or have a hot-water bottle on your feet at night.
- Change your socks and/or tights/stockings daily.
- Cut your toenails carefully. If this is difficult for you, ask a chiropodist to do them for you.
- If you have a corn or callus, visit the chiropodist regularly for treatment.
- If you develop a problem with your foot (eg pain, redness, an ulcer or blister), go to see your general practitioner (GP) or their practice nurse as soon as possible.

