

Footwear

Well fitting shoes will help to prevent blisters, corns and problems with toenails. Before buying new footwear, always have your feet measured to ensure they are long enough, wide enough and deep enough for any toe deformities.

Buy new shoes in the afternoon, especially if your feet swell. Make sure they are comfortable and beware of neuropathy. Make sure there is plenty of room for your toes and avoid seams over painful areas. Do not wear new shoes for long periods and check any areas that may be rubbing. Try to wear a shoe with a fastening bar or lace as this will hold your feet firmly in the shoe.

Look for footwear that have cushioning or shock absorbing soles to provide more comfort when walking. Ensure hosiery fits correctly and, ideally, socks should be cotton or wool. Wear clean socks or tights daily - natural fibres are best, loosen the ends so the seams don't pull against the toes, especially of elastic stockings.

Slippers offer little support or protection for the foot and can become worn very quickly. This can lead to falls. If they must be worn, then try a style with a Velcro fastener. Examine footwear daily as you may not feel any irregularities, e.g. torn or rucked linings, grit in shoe, or damage to sole.

For further information about this service contact:

Tel: 03307 260077

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Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Trust

Tel: 01223 726789

Email: communications@cpft.nhs.uk

Website: www.cpft.nhs.uk

Patient Advice and Liaison Service

For information about CPFT services or to raise an issue, contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on Freephone 0800 376 0775, or e-mail pals@cpft.nhs.uk

Out-of-hours service for CPFT mental health service users

Please call **NHS 111** for health advice and support.

If you require this information in another format such as braille, large print or another language, please let us know.

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Foot Care Advice For Patients With Diabetes



Risk Factors

You need to take good care of your feet, because they can:

- Develop poor circulation, at an earlier age
- Lose sensation (neuropathy) which could include pain, temperature and touch
- Develop infection easily which can lead to foot problems such as ulcers and in extreme cases gangrene and amputation.

How to avoid foot problems:

- Do not smoke as this increases the risk of poor circulation.
- Keep your diabetes under good control.
- Examine your feet daily using a mirror or ask a friend or relative to help if necessary.

Check for any:

- Swelling
- Redness
- Colour changes
- Breaks in the skin
- Discharge
- Increase in temperature
- Pain
- Numbness
- Heat

If you notice any of these seek professional advice immediately from your GP, or HCPC registered podiatrist.

First aid for feet

Small cuts and abrasions can be treated at home by cleaning the area and applying a sterile dressing. Check the area each day and apply a new dressing daily.

Seek treatment urgently if:

- a cut or abrasion hasn't healed within a week.
- If you are aware of any changes in colour anywhere on your foot or leg.
- If you notice any pain, throbbing or swelling.
- If there is any change in temperature - hot or cold.
- if you feel unwell or feverish.
- If there is any discharge from cuts, corns, hard skin or toenails.

Please see your GP or HCPC registered podiatrist immediately if you have any concerns regarding your feet.

Foot Care Advice

- Avoid walking barefoot.
- Wash your feet daily in lukewarm water, using a mild soap. It is not advisable to soak your feet for long periods.
- Avoid baths that are too hot. Test the water first with your hand or elbow before getting in, as you may have lost some awareness of heat and cold in your feet.

Foot Care Advice

- Dry your feet gently with a towel. Remember not to rub too hard and take care to dry in between your toes.
- If the skin between your toes appears white or moist, use surgical spirits. Avoid talc as this can create more problems.
- If your skin is dry, use a moisturising cream daily. Do not apply between the toes.
- Remove hard skin by gently rubbing with a pumice stone or foot file. Avoid this over joints and bony areas. DO NOT USE sharp instruments (such as razorblades) to cut off corns and DO NOT USE paints or plasters containing acids on corns.
- Cut nails straight across following contour of nail. Do not cut too short, and never attempt to cut down the side or use a sharp instrument to clean this area.
- If you do get discomfort from the sides of your nail from debris building up, use an unwanted toothbrush and gently stroke away from yourself towards the tip of the toe. Rubbing in a small amount of cream can help to soften this area.
- On holiday, avoid wearing new shoes, protect your feet from the sun and make sure footwear and hosiery are not too tight as your feet may swell during travelling
- Make sure bed socks are loose fitting
- Avoid sitting close to fires/heaters. Cover legs with a blanket for extra warmth. Also avoid hot water bottles, foot spas and hot baths.