

What should I do if I have a concern or a problem with my feet?

It is important that you check your feet regularly, at least twice daily, especially when on holiday as you may be more active than usual.
If you develop any of the following problems, it is important that you get medical advice immediately, as any delay can have serious life-and limb- threatening consequences.

- An accident or injury to a toe or foot
- A change in the colour or shape of your foot, or swelling to a toe or foot
- A change in the temperature of your foot or lower limb
- New or unexplained pain in your foot
- Oozing or odour from a wound on a toe or foot
- A wound or break in the skin to a toe or foot

When you get home, you must report your concern to your doctor (GP), Foot protection Team, Multi-disciplinary Foot Care Team, or within 24 hours.

Healthy feet will help you to enjoy your holiday

Individual advice

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Your current foot risk level

Your most recent foot screening has shown that your risk of developing foot complications and foot ulcers because of your diabetes is:

Low / Medium / High / In remission

Local contact numbers

Podiatry Department or Foot Protection Team:

.....
Multi-Disciplinary Foot Care Team:

.....
Normal diabetes clinic:

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This leaflet is for people with a diagnosis of diabetes, including children over the age of 12.

Owned by the Royal College of Podiatry © developed in partnership with Scottish Diabetes -Foot Action Group, Podiatry Ireland and The Health Service Executive (HSE).
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Feedback/ queries on this leaflet. Please send it to Podiatry Ireland info@podiatryireland.ie

Do not rely on this information as an alternative to medical advice from your doctor or other professional healthcare provider



Advice to help you care for your feet on holiday

Diabetes information and advice to help protect your life and limbs

Why should I be worried about my feet while on holiday?

You have been given this advice leaflet because you are going on or considering going on holiday.

Due to diabetes, your feet are at risk of developing problems, as diabetes can change:

- the feeling in your feet (peripheral sensory neuropathy); and
- the circulation in your feet (chronic limb-threatening ischaemia).

This risk can sometimes increase while you are on holiday. When you are on holiday your routine and environment change and you may be more active than usual, which can put your feet at increased risk of developing problems which can become serious.

This leaflet contains advice to help you care for your feet yourself while enjoying your holiday.

Before booking your holiday, check your health insurance cover, especially if you are planning to travel abroad.

What can I do to reduce my risk of developing foot problems?

On the journey

Long journeys can make your feet swell. Try to walk about every half hour if possible, even a short distance will help. This will help keep swelling down. Remember your feet may swell in the heat, so make sure your shoes and socks are not too tight.

Check your feet every day

You should check your feet at least twice a day for any blisters, breaks in the skin, pain or any signs of infection such as swelling, heat or change in colour, just as you would at home, it is recommended to increase your foot checks while on holidays. If you cannot do this yourself, ask your partner, carer or other family member to help you.

Skin care for your feet

You should wash your feet every day in warm water and with a mild soap. Rinse them thoroughly and dry them carefully, gently between the toes. Do not soak your feet as this can damage your skin. Because of your diabetes, you may not be able to feel hot and cold very well. You should test the temperature of the water with your elbow or ask someone else to do it for you. If your skin is dry, apply a moisturising cream, avoiding the areas between your toes.

Remember to apply sunscreen to your feet to reduce the risk of sunburn. If you are travelling to an area where mosquitoes are present, use fly or mosquito repellent on your feet to reduce the risk of bites.

Toenail care

Carry on cutting your toenails as your podiatrist has advised you to or if you need to attend a private Podiatrist/Chiropodist please ensure they hold CORU registration.

Avoid walking barefoot

Always wear footwear, even on the beach. The sand can become very warm and you may burn your feet without realising it. If you go into the sea, wear appropriate water footwear to protect your feet from injury.

Avoid wearing 'flip-flop' type footwear as this may cause blisters between your toes.

Check your shoes

Check the bottom of your shoes before putting them on to make sure that nothing sharp such as a pin, nail or glass has pierced the outer sole. Also, run your hand inside each shoe to check that no small objects such as small stones have fallen in. Any objects that are inside your shoes or have pierced the outer sole can put your feet at risk of injury.

Prescription shoes

If you have been supplied with prescribed shoes, do not wear any other shoes during your holiday (except when you are in the water).

Minor cuts and blisters

Take a small first-aid kit containing sterile gauze, antiseptic cream/liquid, dressings and adhesive tape. If you get a small blister, cut or graze, use the antiseptic as directed on a gauze swab to clean the wound and apply the dry sterile gauze dressing, or clean the area with clean water and use a sterile plaster or gauze dressing. Do not burst blisters.

Avoid using cotton wool as the fibres may irritate the wound. Monitor the area regularly. Seek medical advice if not improving.

Medications and prescriptions

Make sure that you pack any antibiotic prescriptions, dressings, insoles and footwear that have been prescribed and issued to you.

If you take sulphonylureas (for example, gliclazide, glipizide, glibenclamide and glimepiride), you should take extra precautions to avoid too much sunlight as these drugs can cause issues with photosensitivity, making your skin more sensitive to sunlight.

Stopping smoking

If you smoke, you are strongly advised to stop. Speak to a healthcare provider about supports to help you to stop smoking or visit the HSE website - Quit Smoking.

Avoid high or low temperatures

Protect your feet from sunburn with a high-factor sun-protection cream (factor 30 or above) or keep them covered. Do not use dark-coloured materials to protect your feet as they absorb heat and you could burn your feet.

If you have any concerns or discover any problems with your feet, contact a medical centre, podiatry clinic or GP for advice immediately.