# Diabetic Foot Care & Nail Health Fact Sheet

Evexia Foot Care
Expert Care for Every Step

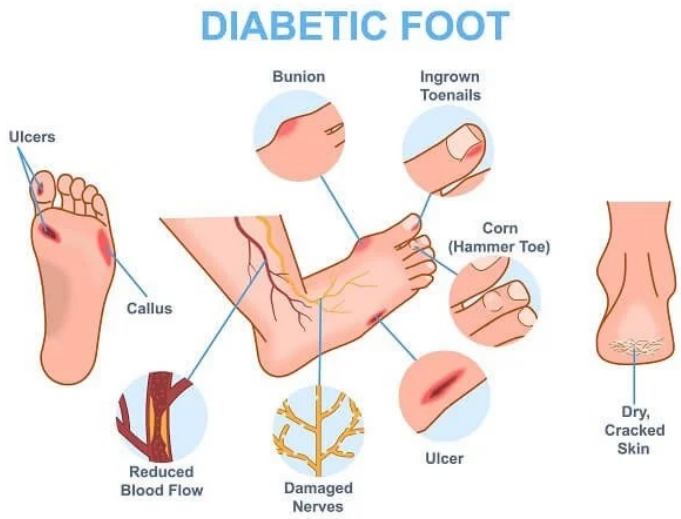
## 📋 Introduction

People with diabetes are at higher risk of foot problems due to **nerve damage (neuropathy)** and **poor blood circulation**. Even minor issues — such as a small cut or an ingrown toenail — can develop into serious complications if ignored. Good daily foot care and correct nail maintenance are among the most effective ways to prevent avoidable harm.

## ⚠️ Why Diabetes Needs Extra Foot Care

| Common Change | What It Means |
|---|---|
| **Loss of sensation** | You may not feel pain, heat or cold properly — so injuries can go unnoticed |
| **Reduced blood flow** | Wounds heal more slowly; minor infections can become serious quickly |
| **Dry, cracked skin** | Cracks let bacteria enter and cause infection |
| **Fungal infections** | More common and harder to clear in people with diabetes |
| **Deformed toes / pressure points** | Can rub against shoes, leading to ulcers |

💡 **Key message:** A person with diabetes may not feel a problem developing until it has already become severe. Regular checking is critical — *don't wait until it hurts*.



# ✅ Daily Foot Care Routine — 7 Simple Steps

| Step | Action |
|---|---|
| 👀 **1. Check your feet** | Look carefully at the tops, soles, heels and between your toes every day. Use a mirror if needed. Look for: cuts, blisters, redness, swelling, warmth, or changes in skin colour |
| 🚿 **2. Wash daily** | Use **lukewarm water** — always test temperature with your elbow first. Dry thoroughly — especially between the toes — by patting, not rubbing |
| 🧴 **3. Moisturise** | Apply cream or lotion to heels and soles to prevent cracking. **Do NOT put cream between your toes** — this encourages fungal infection |
| 🧦 **4. Keep feet dry** | Change socks at least once a day or if they become damp. Wear natural fibres or moisture-wicking socks. Avoid tight elastic tops |
| 👟 **5. Wear shoes always** | Never walk barefoot — even indoors or at night. Wear well-fitted shoes with a wide toe box |
| 🔍 **6. Check your shoes** | Before putting them on, feel inside for stones, rough seams or foreign objects |
| 🚶 **7. Keep active** | Walking and gentle exercise improves blood flow to your feet |

# 💅 Nail Care — Safe Practice

### ✅ DO:

- ✅ Trim nails **straight across**, not down at the sides
- ✅ Keep nails at a moderate length — not too long, not too short
- ✅ Use a file to smooth sharp corners or rough edges
- ✅ Clean under nails gently — avoid sharp instruments
- ✅ See a podiatrist if you have difficulty seeing, reaching, or cutting your own nails

❌ **DO NOT:**

- ❌ Cut into the corners or sides of the nail — this causes ingrown nails and infection
- ❌ Use sharp knives, scissors or razor blades around nails
- ❌ Pick or tear at nails or surrounding skin
- ❌ Attempt to treat corns, calluses or thickened nails yourself — **see a podiatrist**
- ❌ Ignore changes in nail colour or thickness — this may indicate fungal infection

## 🦠 Common Nail Problems in Diabetes

| Problem | Signs | What to Do |
|---|---|---|
| **Fungal nail infection** | Yellow/brown discolouration, thickening, crumbling edges | Keep feet dry; wear breathable socks; see your podiatrist — do not ignore it |
| **Ingrown toenail** | Nail grows into the skin; redness, swelling, warmth | ⚠️ **Seek professional help immediately.** Do not try to cut it out yourself — infection can spread rapidly |
| **Thickened nails** | Difficult to trim; may press on shoes causing pain | Podiatrists can safely reduce thickened nails — much safer than doing it yourself |

## 🚨 When to Seek Urgent Help

Contact your GP, podiatrist or diabetes team **promptly** if you notice any of the following:

- 🟥 Redness, warmth or swelling around a nail or on any part of your foot
- 🟧 Pain or throbbing — even mild persistent discomfort
- 🟩 Any break in the skin that is not healing within 48 hours
- 🟨 Black or discoloured areas on your toes or feet
- 🟦 Discharge or unpleasant smell
- 🟪 Sudden changes in sensation

⚠️ **Never ignore a problem — what looks small can become serious very quickly in diabetes.**

## 📆 Regular Reviews

- ✅ Attend your **annual foot screening** — this is part of your routine diabetes care
- ✅ If you are at higher risk, you may be offered appointments more frequently
- ✅ Keep a note of any changes you notice between visits — share these with your practitioner

## 📝 Quick Checklist

Table

| ✅ | Action |
|---|---|
| ☐ | Check feet every day |
| ☐ | Wash and dry carefully — especially between toes |
| ☐ | Moisturise — not between toes! |
| ☐ | Trim nails straight across |
| ☐ | Wear shoes and socks at all times |
| ☐ | See a podiatrist for difficult nails or foot problems |
| ☐ | Attend all foot screening appointments |

**Disclaimer:** This fact sheet is for educational purposes only and does not replace professional medical or podiatric advice. If you have diabetes, always follow the advice of your healthcare team. When in doubt — ask your podiatrist or GP. **Safety first.**

**Sources:** NHS Guidelines, Royal College of Podiatry, Diabetes UK