

# Diabetes and Your Feet

## Important information for diabetic patients

Diabetes can cause a loss of feeling in your feet. It can also harm blood vessels, causing poor blood flow. Diabetes can also increase the risk of injuries or sores.

## Symptoms of foot problems

- ✓ Cold feet
- ✓ Burning and tingling
- ✓ Scaling, itching, or dryness
- ✓ Open sores
- ✓ Change in foot shape
- ✓ Swelling, warmth, or redness

## Preventing foot problems

- ✓ **Take control of your diabetes.**
  - Controlling your blood sugar is the best way to prevent foot problems.
- ✓ **Perform foot self-exams\* and have foot screenings.**
  - Check your feet daily: look for redness, blisters, infected nails, cuts, or sores.
  - If you notice any cuts or sores, contact your healthcare provider right away.
  - Have your feet checked by a healthcare provider once or twice a year.
- ✓ **Care for your feet and wear proper shoes.**
  - Wash your feet in warm (not hot) water each night. Dry your feet well, especially between your toes.
  - Keep your toenails trimmed.
  - Wearing the right shoes is very important. Ask your healthcare provider where you can get shoes that are made for people with diabetes.
  - Never walk barefoot, even indoors.
- ✓ **Quit smoking.**
  - Because of your diabetes, smoking can cause more harm to your nerves and blood vessels.

## Proper foot care is key

- ✓ **The sooner a foot wound is found and treated, the better the outcome.**
- ✓ **See your healthcare provider as soon as you find a foot wound.**

\*See the back of this sheet for foot self-exam instructions.