

DICKINSON COUNTY DIABETES SUPPORT GROUP

Memorial Health System



Diabetes and Your Feet

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

There's a lot to manage if you have diabetes: checking your blood sugar, making healthy food, finding time to be active, taking medicines, going to doctor's appointments. With all that, your feet might be the last thing on your mind. But daily care is one of the best ways to prevent foot complications.

About half of all people with diabetes have some kind of nerve damage. You can have nerve damage in any part of your body, but nerves in your feet and legs are most often affected. Nerve damage can cause you to lose feeling in your feet.

Feeling No Pain

Some people with nerve damage have numbness, tingling, or pain, but others have no symptoms. Nerve damage can also lower your ability to feel pain, heat, or cold.

Living without pain sounds pretty good, but it comes at a high cost. Pain is the body's way of telling you something's wrong so you can take care of yourself. If you don't feel pain in your feet, you may not notice a cut, blister, sore, or other problem. Small problems can become serious if they aren't treated early.

Could You Have Nerve Damage?

Anyone with diabetes can develop nerve damage, but these factors increase your risk:

- Blood sugar levels that are hard to manage
- Having diabetes for a long time, especially if your blood sugar is often higher than your target levels
- Being overweight
- Being older than 40 years
- Having high blood pressure
- Having high cholesterol

Nerve damage, along with poor blood flow—another diabetes complication—puts you at risk for developing a foot ulcer (a sore or wound) that could get infected and not heal well. If an infection doesn't get better with treatment, your toe, foot, or part of your leg may need to be amputated (removed by surgery) to prevent the infection from spreading and to save your life.

When you check your feet every day, you can catch problems early and get them treated right away. Early treatment greatly reduces your risk of amputation.

When to See Your Doctor

If you experience any of these symptoms, don't wait for your next appointment. See your regular doctor or foot doctor right away:

- Pain in your legs or cramping in your buttocks, thighs, or calves during physical activity.
- Tingling, burning, or pain in your feet.
- Loss of sense of touch or ability to feel heat or cold very well.
- A change in the shape of your feet over time.
- Loss of hair on your toes, feet, and lower legs.

Diabetes Support Group meets the first Tuesday of every month.

We will not be meeting in the month of August. Please enjoy the rest of the summer!

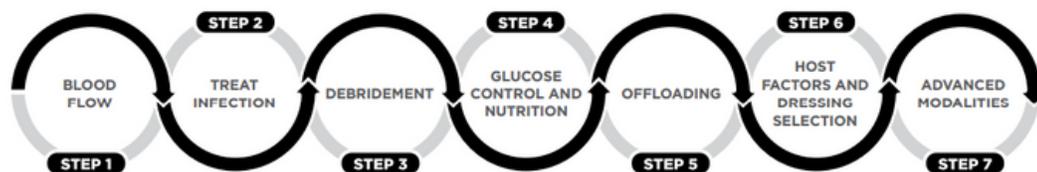
Diabetes and Your Feet continued...

- Dry, cracked skin on your feet.
- A change in the color and temperature of your feet.
- Thickened, yellow toenails.
- Fungus infections such as athlete's foot between your toes.
- A blister, sore, ulcer, infected corn, or ingrown toenail.

Most people with diabetes can prevent serious foot complications. Regular care at home and going to all doctor's appointments are your best bet for preventing foot problems (and stopping small problems from becoming serious ones).

Memorial Health System Wound Center

July is the 7 Steps of Wound Management month, and Memorial Health System's Comprehensive Wound Center is using these steps as a foundation to the wound healing process. The 7 Steps of Wound Management provides an organized clinical practice pathway to ensure comprehensive assessment and management of wounds. As the foundation for everything we do clinically, the 7 Steps are supported by evidence-based best practices and are critical in the treatment of wound care patients.



August's Featured Recipe: Summer Strawberry Orange Cups

Ingredients

- 2 cups fresh strawberries, stems removed, divided
- 1 packet (1/4 ounce) unflavored gelatin
- 2 tablespoons cold water
- 2 tablespoons boiling water
- 1 1/2 cups reduced-fat (2%) milk
- 1/2 cup frozen orange juice concentrate
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

Directions

1. Cut 1 cup strawberries into thin slices; place in bottom of 6 (8-ounce) dessert bowls or custard cups.
2. Combine gelatin and cold water in small bowl; let stand 5 minutes. Add boiling water to softened gelatin; stir until completely dissolved.
3. Combine milk, orange juice concentrate and vanilla in medium bowl; mix well. Let stand at room temperature 20 minutes. Stir in gelatin mixture until well blended. Pour evenly over sliced strawberries in bowls. Refrigerate 2 hours, or until completely set.
4. Slice remaining 1 cup strawberries; arrange on top of each dessert.

Nutrition Facts

Calories: 89 calories, Carbohydrates: 16 g, Protein: 4 g, Fat: 1 g, Saturated Fat: 1 g, Cholesterol: 5 mg, Sodium: 29 mg, Fiber: 1 g
Exchanges per serving: 1/2 Fat, 1 Fruit. Serving Size: 1/6 of recipe
Source: Diabetes Self-Management



I'm always looking for great ideas for speakers and activities! If you have something you would like more information on, or a topic that you find interesting, please feel free to send me an email or give me a call.

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