

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE A CONCERN OR PROBLEM WITH MY FEET?

If you regularly attend a podiatrist but discover blisters, breaks in the skin, pain or any signs of infection (swelling, heat or redness) between visits, **contact your local Podiatry clinic** as soon as you identify the problem so that you can get advice. If you don't regularly have treatment, a self referral form can be completed.

Self Referral into Podiatry Service

A **self referral** form can be found on our NHS Fife website: www.nhsfife.org. Search for **Podiatry**. Our referral form is at the bottom of the page on the **General Podiatry** tab.

Carnegie unit, Queen Margaret Hospital:

01383 627088

Cowdenbeath Clinic :

01383 511111

Randolph Wemyss Memorial Hospital:

01592 712427

Glenwood Health Centre:

01592 765034

Whytemans Brae Hospital, Kirkcaldy:

01592 645218

St Andrews Community Hospital:

01334 465782

If they are not available, go to your nearest **accident and emergency** department. Remember, any delay in getting advice or treatment when you have a problem can lead to serious problems.

NHS Fife provides accessible communication in a variety of formats including for people who are speakers of community languages, who require Easy Read versions, who speak BSL, read Braille or use Audio formats.

NHS Fife SMS text service number 07805800005 is available for people who have a hearing or speech impairment.

To find out more about accessible formats contact:

fife.equalityandhumanrights@nhs.scot

or phone 01592 729130

Fife Council and NHS Fife are supporting the people of Fife together through Fife's Health and Social Care Partnership.

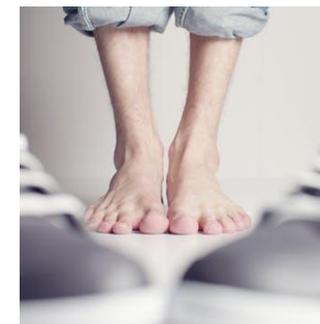
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PODIATRY DEPARTMENT



WHY IS DIABETES A RISK TO YOUR FEET?

Diabetes is a lifelong condition which can cause life and limb-threatening problems. Some of these problems can occur because the nerves and blood vessels, including those supplying your legs and feet, are damaged. This can change both the feeling in your feet and the blood circulation in your feet.

These changes can be very gradual and you may not notice them to begin with. This is why it is essential you **check your feet daily**.

WHAT CAN I DO TO REDUCE MY RISK OF DEVELOPING PROBLEMS?

- **Check your feet every day**, for blisters, breaks in the skin, swelling, heat or redness (this can be a sign of infection). If you discover any breaks in the skin or blisters, cover them with a sterile dressing. Do not burst blisters.
- **Avoid wearing badly-fitting footwear** which is a common cause of irritation or damage to feet.
- **Avoid high and low temperatures**. Never sit with your feet in front of the fire to warm them up. Always remove hot-water bottles or heating pads from your bed before getting in. Never put your feet into icy cold water to cool them down.

SKIN CARE FOR YOUR FEET

- You should **wash your feet every day** in warm water and a mild soap. Rinse them well and dry them carefully, especially between the toes.
- **Do not soak your feet** as this can damage your skin. Check the water temperature before putting your feet into it.
- If your **skin is dry**, apply a moisturising cream, avoiding the areas between your toes.
- **File your toe nails** regularly.
- **Change your socks or tights regularly**. They should not have bulky seams or elasticated tops.
- **Don't walk barefoot**. You risk injury by standing on sharp objects which can damage the skin.
- **Check the bottom of your shoes** before putting them on to make sure that nothing sharp such as a pin, has stuck into the outer sole.

- **Check inside each shoe** to check that no small objects such as small stones have fallen in.

HARD SKIN AND CORNS

Do not try to remove hard skin or corns yourself. Contact your local Podiatrist for advice by completing a self referral form (details overleaf) or obtain a paper copy at your local podiatry or GP practice.

Avoid over-the-counter corn remedies, they can be dangerous and can lead to new wounds and infections.

You can help to reduce the risk of developing an ulcer by

- **Control** your diabetes, cholesterol level and blood pressure.
- **Stop** smoking.
- **Increase** cardiovascular exercise.
- **Maintain** a healthy weight.

