

# Ulcerated Foot (Diabetes)

Allied Healthcare Profession (AHP)  
Podiatry

The prevention of infection is a major priority in all healthcare and everyone has a part to play.

- Please decontaminate your hands frequently for 20 seconds using soap and water or alcohol gel if available
- If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, cough or other respiratory symptoms, a temperature or any loss of taste or smell please do not visit the hospital or any other care facility and seek advice from 111
- Keep the environment clean and tidy
- Let's work together to keep infections out of our hospitals and care homes.

# Introduction

This leaflet is for people who have diabetes and who may suffer an ulcerated foot, how to prevent infection, and how to look after your diabetic foot ulcer.

## Why is diabetes a risk to my 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, become damaged.

This can change:

- The feeling in your feet (peripheral neuropathy)
- The circulation in your feet (ischaemia)

These changes can be very gradual, and you may not notice them. This is why it is essential you have your feet checked (screened) every year by a suitably trained health-care worker.

About one in ten people with diabetes will develop a foot ulcer at some stage.

A foot ulcer can become infected, and the infection may become severe. It is important that you look after your foot ulcer to prevent infection occurring.

Controlling your diabetes, cholesterol and blood pressure levels, as well as having your feet screened and assessed every year by a podiatrist, will help to reduce future foot problems.

If you smoke, you are strongly advised to stop. Smoking affects your circulation and can lead to amputation.

As you have a diabetic foot ulcer, you will need regular podiatry treatment.

Your podiatrist will draw up a treatment plan to meet your needs.

## How to look after your diabetic foot ulcer

Do not touch the dressing unless you have been properly shown how to remove and replace it correctly and you have suitable dressings to replace the one you are changing.

## **Continue to check your feet every day**

Continue to check both your feet every day for any other problem areas or danger signs.

## **Danger signs**

You should pay close attention to any of the following danger signs when checking your feet:

- Is there any new pain or throbbing?
- Does your foot feel hotter than usual?
- Are there any new areas of redness, inflammation or swelling and is it spreading up your foot or leg?
- Is there an increase in discharge or change in the type of discharge from your wound?
- Is there a new strong or unpleasant smell from your foot?
- Do you have any flu-like symptoms?

**If you are concerned, contact your foot care team immediately.**

## **Do not get the dressing wet**

Getting the dressing wet may prevent healing or allow bacteria to enter the ulcer. This will cause more problems. Your podiatrist may be able to supply you with a dressing protector to keep the dressing dry, or they may give you a form to take to your GP to get a dressing protector on prescription. The dressing protector will allow you to have a bath or shower safely while keeping your dressing dry (for more information speak to your podiatrist).

## **Moisturise the surrounding area of your feet**

If your skin is dry, apply a moisturising cream every day, avoiding areas of broken skin and the areas between your toes.

## **Do not stand or walk on the affected foot**

Avoid any unnecessary standing or walking. A wound cannot heal if it is constantly under pressure. Rest as much as possible and keep your foot up to help it to heal. Use anything your podiatrist recommends or gives you to relieve pressure on your foot.

## **Footwear**

You may be asked to wear a cast, a device to relieve pressure or a special shoe until your ulcer has healed. You should not wear any other footwear until your podiatrist tells you that you can wear your own shoes again.

## **Podiatry appointments**

Always attend your appointments to have your ulcer treated. You may need regular appointments until the wound has healed. Your appointment may be with a district nurse, a treatment room nurse or your podiatrist.

## **Antibiotic treatment**

You will be given antibiotics if there are signs of infection in the wound or in the nearby tissue. You should report any side effects you develop when taking antibiotics, these may include rashes, nausea, or diarrhoea. Speak to the person who prescribed them for you. If this person is not available, contact your GP immediately or call 111 for further advice.

Do not stop taking your antibiotics unless the person treating you, or your GP tells you to do so. Make sure you have enough antibiotics to finish the course, so your treatment is not interrupted.

**If the infection is spreading, you may need to go to hospital.**

# Individual advice

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal dashed lines, typical of primary-ruled notebook paper. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

# Contact details

## **Podiatry Department**

Phoenix Health Centre  
Parkfield Road  
Wolverhampton  
WV4 6ED

Tel: 01902 444044

## **Opening Times:**

Monday – Friday, 8:30am – 4:30pm excluding Bank Holidays.

## **Diabetic Foot Clinic**

New Cross Hospital  
Wolverhampton Road  
Wolverhampton  
WV10 0QP

Tel: 01902 69531

## **Opening Times:**

Monday-Friday, 08:30am-4:30pm excluding Bank Holidays

**For further information visit:** [www.wdconline.org.uk](http://www.wdconline.org.uk)

**For emergencies** outside of normal working hours, please contact:  
NHS 111 service on 111.

## English

If you need information in another way like easy read or a different language please let us know.

If you need an interpreter or assistance please let us know.

## Lithuanian

Jeigu norėtumėte, kad informacija jums būtų pateikta kitu būdu, pavyzdžiui, supaprastinta forma ar kita kalba, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Jeigu jums reikia vertėjo ar kitos pagalbos, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

## Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej postaci, na przykład w wersji łatwej do czytania lub w innym języku, prosimy powiedzieć nam o tym.

Prosimy poinformować nas również, jeżeli potrzebowaliby Państwo usługi tłumaczenia ustnego lub innej pomocy.

## Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਸਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ, ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

## Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații în alt format, ca de exemplu caractere ușor de citit sau altă limbă, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret sau de asistență, vă rugăm să ne informați.

## Traditional Chinese

如果您需要以其他方式了解信息，如易读或其他语种，请告诉我们。

如果您需要口译人员或帮助，请告诉我们。