

Diabetes Wise

A SEMIANNUAL NEWSLETTER FOR CDPHP® MEMBERS WITH DIABETES

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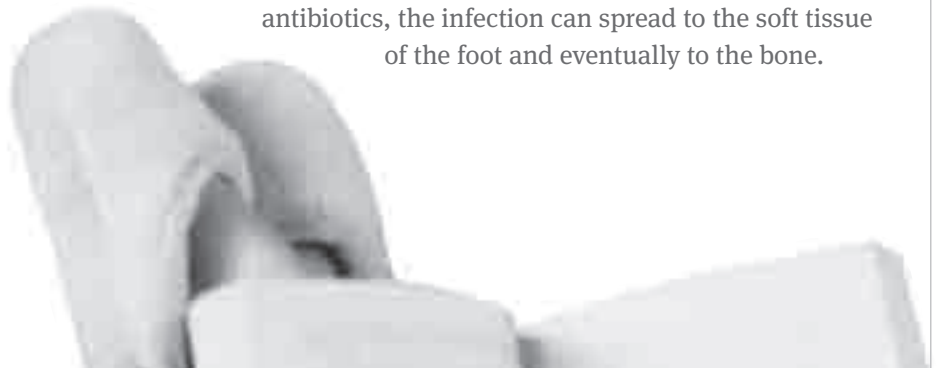
Foot Care 101

If you have diabetes, it is important that you keep your feet in tip-top shape. Many people with the disease may experience decreased sensation in their feet and toes. Every year thousands of diabetics will lose a leg, a foot, or toes. And in almost every case, this catastrophic injury could have been prevented.

When people with diabetes feel pain, tingling, and numbness in their feet, high blood sugar is usually the cause. Although hands or other parts of the body can also be affected, this occurs less often. Pain, tingling, and numbness are warning signs that these high blood sugars are killing off the nerve cells in your extremities. By keeping your blood sugar under control, you can help protect yourself against developing these problems.

Often, the signs may be a small break in the skin, a small callus, a blister, a corn, or even a scrape. If left untreated or unnoticed, a simple sore can turn into a dangerous, festering wound.

Why is the foot more vulnerable? In part this is because our feet carry multiple bacteria and fungi. Thus, a small opening can become easily infected. Therefore, when washing your feet it is extremely important that you dry them thoroughly. Wet or damp feet can become a breeding ground for these bacteria, leading to more infections. If not treated with antibiotics, the infection can spread to the soft tissue of the foot and eventually to the bone.



What can I do to prevent foot problems?

- Keep blood sugars under control.
- If you smoke, **STOP!!!**
- Never cut corns or calluses.
- Never use over-the-counter corn removers.
- Never go barefoot.
- Wear absorbent wool or cotton socks.
- Wash your feet daily in warm water and then inspect the bottom of your feet for sores, cuts, blisters, etc.
- Do not use perfumed lotions that could clump up between your toes.
- Trim your toenails by cutting straight across the nail.
- Break in new shoes gradually to prevent blisters.
- Always wear shoes that fit properly.
- Never use heating pads or hot water bottles that can burn your feet.
- Don't cross your legs.
- Never wear tight socks, garters, or any type of elastic bands around your legs.
- Stay active: Activities such as walking, swimming, yoga, biking, and other low-impact activities will help you get your blood flowing.

Finally, be sure to have your doctor look at your feet at every visit. Taking off your shoes and socks before the exam will help remind both of you. Call your doctor promptly if you notice a corn, callus, or an opening on your foot.

Diabetes and Exercise

Whether you do or don't have diabetes, everyone needs to exercise. By participating in a regular exercise program, you can lower your blood pressure, your bad cholesterol, reduce your stress level, and if you have diabetes, improve your blood sugar. Regular exercise will also help you better control your weight.

When you exercise, your muscles use sugar (glucose) for energy, which will reduce your blood sugar. The more strenuous your workout, the longer this effect will last. If you have Type 2 diabetes, exercise can increase your insulin sensitivity. This will allow your body to require less insulin, which is needed to escort the sugar into your cells. Sugar is needed in the cells so your organs function properly. In addition, if the sugar is not absorbed into the cells, it remains in the bloodstream, causing high blood sugar.

Another great benefit of exercise is that it will increase your heart's pumping power. This will improve circulation to the extremities. You will also feel much better if you incorporate some exercise into your daily life.

Tips for beginning an exercise program:

- Check with your doctor first.
- Monitor your blood sugar.
- Drink plenty of water before, during, and after exercise.
- Wear identification.
- Know when to stop.
- Carry hard candy in case your blood sugar drops.
- Wear smooth-fitting cotton socks.
- Wear sturdy athletic shoes.
- Start out slowly and gradually increase the duration and intensity of the program.



Recipe Pizza Puffs

Ingredients

- 1 4½-ounce package reduced-fat refrigerated buttermilk biscuits
- 1½ tablespoons low-sodium or regular tomato sauce
- ½ teaspoon Italian seasoning
- ½ tablespoon grated Parmesan cheese

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 450 degrees F. Spray a small baking sheet with nonstick spray coating. Set aside.
2. In a custard cup, mix together the tomato sauce and Italian seasoning. Set aside.
3. Open the biscuit carton and separate the biscuits. Place them on the baking sheet.
4. With a small spoon, spread the tomato sauce and seasoning mixture on the biscuits, dividing the mixture evenly. Bake in the center of the oven for eight to 10 minutes or until golden. Serve hot.
5. Leftovers will keep one to two days in the refrigerator, tightly wrapped.

Nutritional Information (per serving)

Calories: 54; Protein: 2 g; Sodium: 191 mg; Cholesterol: 1 mg; Fat: 1 g; Carbohydrates: 10 g; Exchanges: ½ starch

Source: *The Diabetes Snack, Munch, Nibble, Nosh Book*