

Family Foot & Ankle Care, P.C.

Dr. Alan J. Discont & Associates

Physicians & Surgeons of the Foot & Ankle

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS WITH DIABETES AND VASCULAR DISEASE

Dear Patient:

About 12 million Americans have Diabetes, nearly one in every twenty people. Approximately 2 million people have insulin dependent Diabetes and about ten million have non-insulin dependent Diabetes.

Diabetes is a serious metabolic disease that usually effects your feet. The disease effects the way your body uses sugar and how it produces insulin. Today, medicine has advanced significantly in treating the dangerous effects of abnormal blood sugar (Hyperglycemia, Diabetic Neuropathy, infection, renal disorders and premature death). This is both good and bad news. The good news is that people with Diabetes are living longer, healthier lives. The bad news is that Diabetes still causes secondary, indirect complications that affect the feet, eyes and kidneys over time. Diabetic foot disease is primarily caused by two complications of the disease; **Neuropathy** (decreased nerve sensation) and **Atherosclerosis** (poor circulation).

Neuropathy is nerve damage of the foot causing numbness and loss of sensation in the feet. This loss of sensation makes it difficult for the patient to distinguish between hot and cold, or to realize when the foot has been cut, bruised or injured. In a way, your feet become "unprotected." Ulcers, cuts, scrapes, burns and other trauma to your feet can go unnoticed until it is too late to avoid serious problems such as ulceration, infection, gangrene and surgery.

Atherosclerosis causes a diabetic to have poor circulation which adversely affects the legs and feet. Additionally, white blood cells which fight infection do not get to the areas where they are needed. This can seriously compound any foot problems because the body's defenses may be unable to prevent the development of Cellulitis (infection of the skin), Abscesses (infection of soft tissues under the skin), or Osteomyelitis (infection of the bone). This can result in foot ulcers that won't heal, gangrene and even amputations.

Experts agree that 50% to 75% of foot amputations among people with diabetes can be eliminated or prevented by early recognition, and proper treatment. You, your doctors, and your foot doctors at Family Foot & Ankle Care, P.C., do make a difference.

While statistics show that early, conservative and preventative management of Diabetic foot disease can effectively reduce or delay these complications, there is no cure for Diabetes and the complications may be unavoidable, even with the best care. Unfortunately, that is the nature of your disease.

Diabetic patients need and are entitled to all the skill and knowledge of their podiatrist to prevent disastrous complications. A well functioning, blemish-free foot will contribute to the quality of life, and help prevent unnecessary complications. We wish you the best of health and will work very hard with you and your doctors to keep your feet in the best condition your disease will allow.

YOU ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT PERSON IN THE PREVENTION AND DETECTION OF FOOT PROBLEMS AND IN THE DAY TO DAY CARE OF YOUR FEET.

IT YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO SEE YOUR INTERNIST OR FAMILY DOCTOR FOR MANAGEMENT OF YOUR DISEASE! IF YOU FAIL TO DO SO, IT WILL ADVERSELY EFFECT OUR TREATMENT AND YOUR PROGRESS.

I have read and understand this information, as well as received additional information on Diabetic foot care prevention. I consent to have diabetic foot care by the doctors at Family Foot & Ankle Care, P.C., including, but not limited to; routine care, (corns, callouses, nails, etc.) as well as care of ulcers, abscesses, infections and other bone & joint problems when and if needed. I also agree to regularly see my primary doctors every three to six months or less, to monitor and control my diabetic disease.

Patient's Signature (or responsible person, if other than patient)

Date

Chandler Foot & Ankle Center - 600 S. Dobson #D-35, Chandler, Arizona 85224

Sun Lakes Foot & Ankle Center - 10440 E. Riggs Rd., #200, Sun Lakes, Arizona 85248

Office (480) 732-0033 • Fax: (480) 732-0038

www.familyfootdoctors.org

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A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

DO'S FOR DIABETICS:

- Wash feet daily; always dry carefully between the toes.
- Keep feet warm and dry.
- Inspect feet daily for cuts, blisters, scratches, rashes or anything irregular.
- Cut toenails straight across (not into corners).
- Wear comfortable shoes that fit well, made out of natural materials.
- Carefully break in new shoes to avoid blisters. Always wear socks.
- Inspect inside of shoes for foreign objects and torn linings.

DON'TS FOR DIABETICS:

- Don't walk barefoot, even indoors!
- Don't smoke. Smoking reduces blood circulation; in diabetics, this can lead to the loss of a limb.
- Don't cut corns or calluses yourself.
- Don't use hot packs or hot water bottles.
- Avoid open-toed shoes, particularly sandals with thongs between the toes.
- Don't wear shoes without socks.

WHEN TO CONTACT YOUR DOCTOR:

Examine feet regularly between visits and contact your doctor IMMEDIATELY if any of the following occur:

- Ingrown toenail (redness, swelling, drainage on socks, etc.)
- Athlete's foot (cracking and peeling between toes or on the bottom of the foot).
- Any cuts, sores, irritations, blisters, discoloration or dryness.
- Pain or swelling in the feet, ankles or calves.
- Any unusual changes in color, texture or feeling.



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