

GUIDELINES FOR

SKIN

CARE/

DIABETIC

FOOT

CARE



SHOES

BUY only shoes that fit your feet! Have new shoes fit by a professional. Walk around in shoes. Inspect both feet in and out of the shoes to be sure of fit.

BUY new shoes late in the day. Feet swell and shoes that fit in the morning may be too tight later.

CHOOSE shoes with soft leather or athletic-type material that can mold to the shape of your feet.

NEVER buy sandals or shoes with open toes.

NEVER wear new shoes more than two hours at a time.

ALWAYS inspect the inside of your shoes before wearing.

HOSERY

NEVER wear shoes without socks or stockings.

WEAR socks of 100% synthetic material for wicking away moisture.

WEAR only clean socks without holes or darn. You may wear socks inside out to avoid heavy seam pressure.

PHYSICIAN COMMUNICATION

DO see a doctor regularly and remove your shoes and socks at every visit.

REMAND YOUR DOCTOR to check your feet, if necessary.

SEE A DOCTOR PROMPTLY if you develop an area of poor color, a blister, callus or sore.

SEE A WOUND SPECIALIST IF A SORE DOES NOT HEAL PROMPTLY!

NEVER walk on hot pavement or hot sand.

PROTECT feet against sunburn with sunscreen.

CHECK the temperature of bath water with forearm or elbow before bathing.

NEVER cut a corn or callus on yourself. Go to a physician or podiatrist.

TRIM NAILS carefully -straight across – or seek professional help.

NEVER use hot water bottles or heating pads. Be careful of car heaters on long trips.

ALWAYS keep toes clean and free of debris between them.

WHAT ARE SOME COMMON SKIN CARE PROBLEMS THAT NEED ATTENTION?

If not properly treated, the following list of problems may lead to broken skin, ulcerations, infections, or chronic wounds. If you have a chronic condition that makes wound healing difficult and any of the following happens to you, consult your doctor:

- Development of a wound, especially on the lower leg or foot.
- Dry, cracked, peeling skin.
- Blisters.
- Bumps with pus.
- Dermatitis (dry or weeping).
- Allergic reactions.
- Multiple or extensive skin tears.
- Fissures of the skin on the feet, especially the heels.

GENERAL CARE & HYGIENE

INSPECT your feet daily. Use a mirror and pay close attention to soles and between toes. Ask a family member to help for extra careful inspection.

WASH your feet daily. Test the water first with your forearm or elbow to be sure it is not too hot.

IF your feet are dry, apply moisturizing cream immediately after bathing. Don't get the cream between your toes.

DO NOT use garters or elastics to hold socks.

NEVER go barefoot, either indoors or outdoors.

WHAT IS THE CORRECT WAY TO CLEAN AND MOISTURIZE THE SKIN?

Cleansing of the skin needs to be done with gentle care. Use a Ph balanced product to prevent trauma and the drying/stripping of natural oils. Moisturize and/or lubricate the skin after bathing, at other times during the day, and at bedtime to help increase the skin's softness and suppleness. This will also decrease the risk of trauma, friction, itching and general discomfort.

CLEANSING PRODUCTS:

- May be in a cream, foam, gel, liquid, bar or lotion form.
- May be soap-based or non-soap based.
- May be medicated and available by prescription only.
- Need to be natural with minimal to no preservatives.
- May require water for application and rinsing.
- Use lukewarm or room temperature (never hot) water.
- Need to be removed gently and thoroughly.

MOISTURIZING /LUBRICATING PRODUCTS:

Read the label and know what products you are buying. These products:

- Should not include alcohol in any form because it dries the skin.
- May have a lanolin base. You should watch for skin sensitivity.
- May contain perfumes (made from coal tars or seed kernels) or dyes that frequently irritate the skin.

- May contain urea and lactic acid (alpha-hydroxy acid). The alphahydroxy acid in higher concentration may cause stinging of diabetic skin.

SKIN CARE DO'S

- Check your skin daily for dryness, cracks, sores, bruises, reddened area and blisters.
- Cleanse the skin with a mild, pH balanced product. Remember, some people do not require overall cleansing on a daily basis.
- Use warm-to-the-touch (on elbow or inner wrist) bathing water.
- Treat the skin gently without stretching, tugging or pulling.
- Remove all residue of the cleanser from the skin.
- Use a *very soft* brush for nails and crusty skin.
- Dry all skin folds and creases with special attention to the areas between, under and around the toes.
- Moisturize the skin after cleansing. Leave a light film or moisture on the skin just prior to applying lotion or cream.
- Lubricate dry skin with a heavy (barrier) product after moisturizing.
- Wear soft clothing. Wear white socks for feet and gloves for hands, if indicated, for extra protection at night.
- Use baking soda powder or equivalent powders for foot care if perspiration is a problem. It will help with odor and moisture control. Sprinkle on hands, dusting off excess and gently rub into the skin.

SKIN CARE DON'TS

- Don't neglect new areas of irritation, soreness or discomfort on the skin.
- Don't soak for more than ten minutes in the tub.
- Don't bathe in hot water.
- Don't use abrasive or rough wash-cloths on the skin.
- Don't apply lotion or creams between, under or around the toes or nails.
- Don't use lanolin, coal tar or petroleum-based products if you have sensitive skin.
- Don't use skin care products with alcohol and/or extensive lists of preservatives.
- Don't apply tape of any kind to dry, sensitive or fragile skin.