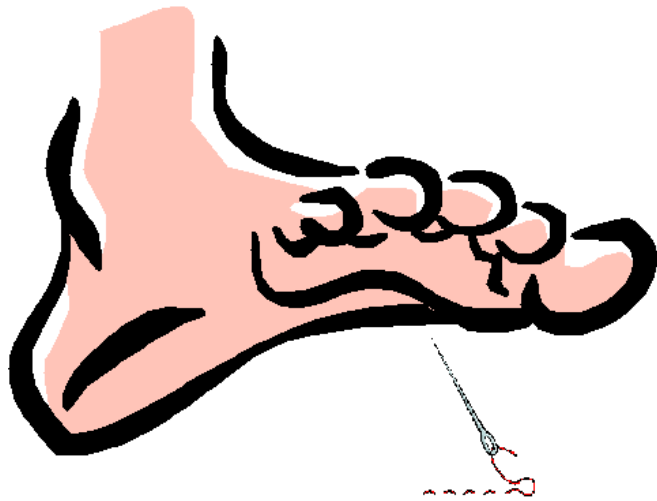


Care of Feet with Loss of Feeling



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ALL DAY AVOIDANCE OF INJURY

1.1 Always wear some form of footwear when you are walking or standing.

- Keep shoes in good and safe repair
- Replace shoes promptly when worn out.
- The soft insole in most shoes is important in cushioning your foot against injury and should be replaced before worn through. Insoles such as “Gel soles” made by Scholl are available from chemists and are good for protecting your feet.
- Special insoles can be made by a Podiatrist to provide further cushioning and support.

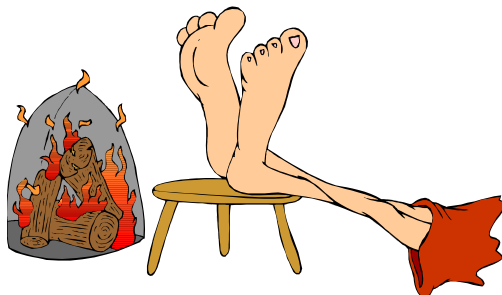


1.2 Remember that walking too much is the most common cause of wounds on a foot with loss of feeling.

- Avoid long walks as much as possible.
- Avoid standing in one position for long periods.
- Use public transport if you do not have access to a car.
- If you do have to walk, remember to sit down and rest often.

1.3 Learn from earlier wounds to your feet.

- Don't make the same mistake twice.
- Learn how much you can walk without getting a wound on your feet.
- Learn the warning signs of injury (2.1). When you notice these, seek advice from your podiatrist or G.P.



1.4 Beware of heat.

- Protect your feet from heat. Non-feeling skin can be burnt more easily than skin that feels.
- Take care with hot water. Don't wash your feet and legs in hot water.
- Beware of fires and other heating sources. Keep your feet well away from open flames or exposed elements.

DAILY ROUTINE OF FOOT INSPECTION AND SKIN CARE

2.1 Set aside a definite time or times each day for foot care routines

- Inspect your feet thoroughly
- Look for signs of injury or swelling
- Look for dry hard skin, especially around the heels
- Inspect between the toes, look for cracks in moist, peeling skin
- Use a mirror to inspect the soles of your feet
- Look for anything that does not look right, or was not there before



2.2 Soak your feet daily

- Use cold water, not hot, and a mild soap
- Test the water temperature with your elbow before putting your feet in
- Soak your feet
- Dry feet with a gentle patting action, rubbing may cause abrasion to the skin
- Make sure you dry between your toes
- Use moisturising cream (sorbolene and glycerine or Vaseline) on your feet, to keep the moisture in.

2.3 Self care of nails and hard skin

- Cut your own toenails only if you have been advised to do so by your podiatrist or GP
- If you have poor eyesight or have difficulty bending, see your podiatrist for assistance
- Cut toenails straight across. Try not to cut down into the corners
- Use nail clippers rather than scissors, as scissors cut with a slicing action which may cut into the skin easily
- DO NOT use corn pads or similar medicated corn cures. They are designed to burn the hardened skin of a corn or callus, and will easily burn normal, healthy skin



2.4 Early detection and care of wounds and cuts

- Identify and remove the cause of the wound, whether it is from a certain pair of shoes or from the amount of walking you do
- Clean the wound well if it is open. Use cold water
- Apply an antiseptic cream or ointment and a band-aid to prevent the wound from becoming infected
- Change this dressing daily
- Rest the wound as much as possible
- Pain normally warns people to rest a wound, but if you have loss of feeling, you may not know you have a wound.

EARLY CARE OF WOUNDS AND CRACKS

3.1 Find and remove the cause of the wound

- Always check the inside of your shoes before you put them on. If there are any objects inside your shoes, remove it.
- If you have been walking too much, rest more often.
- If the shoes are wearing out, replace them, or have them repaired.
- There is little point in trying to heal a wound today if it is going to recur tomorrow.

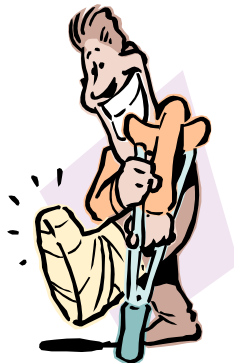
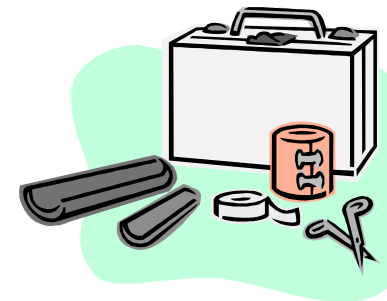


3.2 Clean the wound well if it is open

- Wash the wound area first.
- Use cold water, and you can add either soap or a spoonful of salt to help clean the wound.
- Soak your feet in clean, cold water for about 20 minutes.
- If there is a blister present, DON'T burst it, but if it is already open, squeeze out all the fluid.

3.3 Apply an antiseptic and cover the wound to prevent it from becoming infected

- Keep a supply of antiseptic cream and bandages handy to apply at the first signs of a wound.
- If the wound is large, you may need to use a crepe bandage to cover the whole foot.
- Change the dressing daily after cleaning the wound in cold salty or soapy water.
- Always use a fresh clean bandage. DO NOT reapply the old dressing.



3.4 Rest the wound

- Your body will heal most wounds itself if they are rested enough.
- Complete leg rest is very safe
- Where possible, sit with your foot higher than your hip. This will help healing
- Use a walking stick, crutches or even walk with a limp to help reduce the amount of pressure on the wound. Even if you do not feel any pain, you should try to imagine there is pain and take the weight off the foot.
- You can try using a “PVC walking boot or Aircast”