

## General Foot Care Guidelines

1. Don't go barefoot indoors or outdoors.
2. Inspect your feet daily. Use a mirror to look for any open areas and make sure to look between your toes. Ask a family member or friend to help if you need them.
4. Wash your feet daily. Dry between your toes. Do not use powder.
5. If your feet become really dry, moisturize them. Spread a thin film of moisturizing cream or plain petroleum jelly on the soles of your feet while still damp after bathing. Take care not to get the cream between your toes.
8. Avoid getting your feet too hot or too cold: - Don't walk on hot sand or pavement in summer. - Put sunscreen on your feet when in the hot sun. - Check temperature of bath water before stepping in. - Do not use hot water bottles or heating pads to warm cold feet. Wear loose socks at night in bed if your feet are cold. - Wear absorbent socks. Change them during the day when needed. - Do not wear socks with holes in them. - Beware of car heaters on long trips.

Here are some more tips and tricks to keeping your feet healthy and happy:

- Keep nails trim and cut straight across; don't round corners.
- Never cut corns or calluses yourself. However, your physician may teach you how to smooth calluses using a pumice stone or emery board (if they are not too thick).
- Never use store bought corn or callous removers, foot pads, or arch supports.
- Don't use tape on your feet. Keep feet clean and no dirt between toes. This handout contains tips to help avoid foot problems. If you develop a foot ulcer, or you already have an ulcer that is not getting better, call your therapist or MD and let them know:
- Don't stand in one place for more than 15-20 minutes at a time. Walk around to flex your calf muscles.
- Don't place pillows under your knees in bed. Place the pillows under your entire lower leg if you want to elevate your legs.
- Don't smoke. It causes your blood vessels to narrow and can cause poor circulation to your feet.
- Follow your physician's orders to reduce cholesterol and high blood pressure.
- Eat a well-balanced diet.
- Keep your blood sugars at the level your physician recommends.
- Exercise every day.
- If your physician orders a cane or walker, use it safely.
- Let your physician/therapist know if you have lost feeling or have numbness.
- Look at your feet for ingrown, thick or odd colored toenails.