

Simple Steps to healthy feet:

when to visit or speak to a healthcare professional



OBJECTIVE: To educate members on how often people with diabetes should have their feet checked by a healthcare professional, depending on their level of risk of developing foot complications.

Under normal circumstances people with diabetes should visit their doctor, nurse or podiatrist at least once a year to check the condition of their feet. They may need to have their feet checked several times a year, depending on their level of risk for developing foot complications.

TIP: Advise members to contact their doctor, nurse or podiatrist as soon as possible to find out their level of risk, if they don't know it already. Suggest they take a note of this so they remember.

What to expect during a diabetes foot screening

For more information to educate your members on what to expect during a diabetes foot screening, watch the following [video](#).

Let the group know that it is important to find out their level of risk of developing foot complications. They can do this by visiting their doctor, nurse or podiatrist who will examine their feet and ask questions about their foot health and general diabetes management, such as:

- ◆ If there have been any changes like cuts, blisters, broken skin, or corns
- ◆ Information on any previous foot problems or wounds
- ◆ Whether they have any pain or discomfort in the feet
- ◆ How often they check their feet
- ◆ Do they have any cramp-like pains when walking?
- ◆ How well they are managing their diabetes?¹

Depending on what level of risk they are, here is how often they will need to visit their doctor, nurse or podiatrist.

Note: *If a persons routine appointments have been rescheduled or cancelled, and contact with their healthcare professional has been reduced, it is important to recommend feet are regularly checked at home.*



HIGH RISK

If you've been identified as **HIGH RISK** you should visit your healthcare professional approximately every 2–8 weeks.²

MODERATE RISK

If you've been identified as **MODERATE RISK** you should visit your healthcare professional every 3–6 months.²

LOW RISK

If you've been identified as **LOW RISK** you should visit your healthcare professional annually.²



It's important to tell members that any changes to the condition of the feet should be reported to a healthcare professional. Breaks in the skin or signs of infection should be reported within 24 hours.

Find out more at: www.flexitol.co.uk/simple-steps

NEXT SESSION: When to contact or visit your healthcare professional

References

1. Diabetes UK, What can I expect at my annual foot check, www.diabetes.org.uk/guide-to-diabetes/complications/feet/what-can-i-expect-at-my-annual-foot-check [Last accessed September 2020]
2. Diabetic foot problems: prevention and management, NICE guideline [NG19], Published date: 26 August 2015 Last updated: 11 October 2019 <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng19/chapter/Recommendations#assessing-the-risk-of-developing-a-diabetic-foot-problem> [Last accessed September 2020]