Remember…

- Do not smoke! Smoking can cause a decrease in the blood flow to your legs and feet.
- Do not walk barefoot.
- Do not use chemicals such as alcohol, peroxide or iodine on your feet.
- Do not cut corns or calluses with a razor blade.
- Do not bathe in water that is too hot. Check the temperature of the water with your elbow or arm before getting into the bathtub or shower.
- Do not go out in cold weather without wearing socks with shoes or boots. Keep your feet warm.
- Do not use an electric heating pad or a hot water bottle on your feet.
- Do not get sunburned. Cover your feet to protect them from the sun.
- Do not wear tight-fitting shoes; wrinkled or tight stockings; tight sandals, straps, garters or bandages.

Take care of your feet.
Check them every day!

Massachusetts Department of Public Health
Diabetes Prevention and Control Program
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To order copies of this brochure, go to: www.maclearinghouse.com or call 1-800-952-6637.

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How to Care for Your Feet

- Keep your blood sugar in control.
- Wash your feet every day with warm water and soap. Dry well, especially between the toes.
- Look at the tops and bottoms of your feet for red areas or sores every day.
- If your feet are dry, use lotion, but not between the toes.
- If your feet sweat, use powder.
- Trim your nails straight across after washing your feet. Smooth them with an emery board.
- If you have nerve disease, check with your doctor to see if it is safe to trim your own nails.
- Wear cotton or wool socks/stockings.
- Exercise with your doctor’s consent.
- Always wear shoes or slippers that fit well. Check shoes for rocks or other objects before you put them on.
- Make sure your doctor or health care provider checks your feet at each visit.
- Ask your doctor to check the sense of feeling and pulses in your feet at least once a year.

Diabetes

Diabetes can cause serious foot problems. Poorly controlled blood sugar can cause a decrease in the blood supply to your legs and feet, leading to poor healing. Poorly controlled blood sugar can also damage nerves, resulting in a loss of feeling. When your feet are numb, you are unable to feel pain if your feet are injured. You can protect your feet with good blood sugar control and proper foot care. Your feet deserve your concern.

How to Check Your Feet

- If you use glasses, wear them.
- Sit down in good light.
- Take your shoes and socks off.
- Ask for help or use a mirror to look at areas that are hard to see (like the bottoms of your feet).

What to Look for

Call your doctor or podiatrist if you have:
- Foot injuries or wounds
- Swelling
- Redness
- Areas “hot” to touch
- Pain
- Blisters or bleeding
- Calluses, corns, or plantar warts
- Ingrown toenails
- Rashes
- Dry skin (cracks between toes)
- Unusual itching
- Change in color (from pale to deep purple or red)
- Thick, rough, or hard areas
- Areas of very shiny skin
- Bad smell

Bad smell