

Taking Steps to Healthy Feet

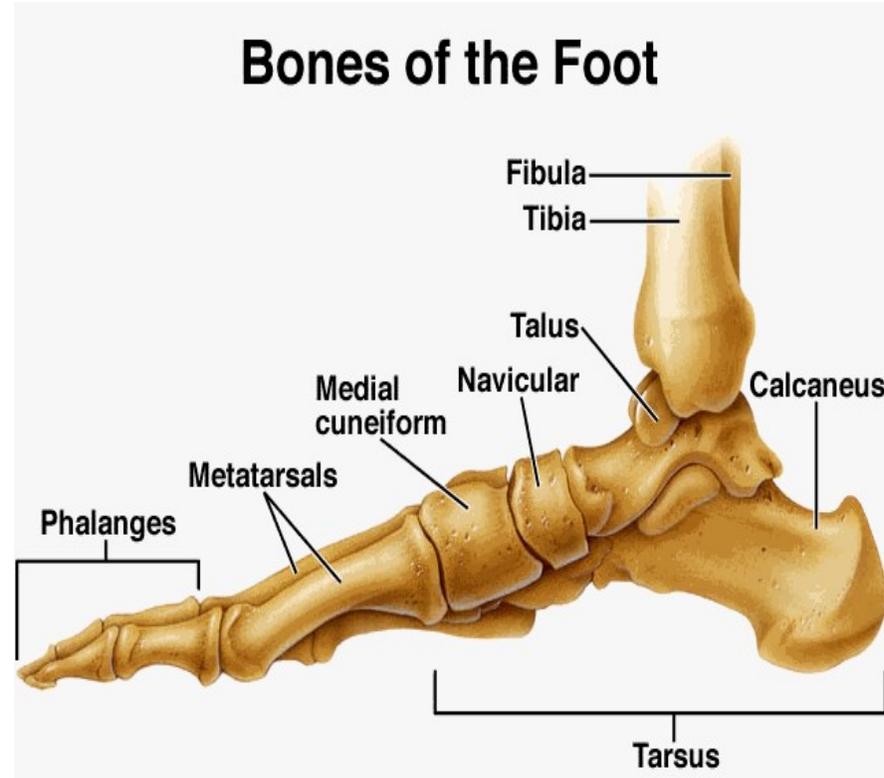
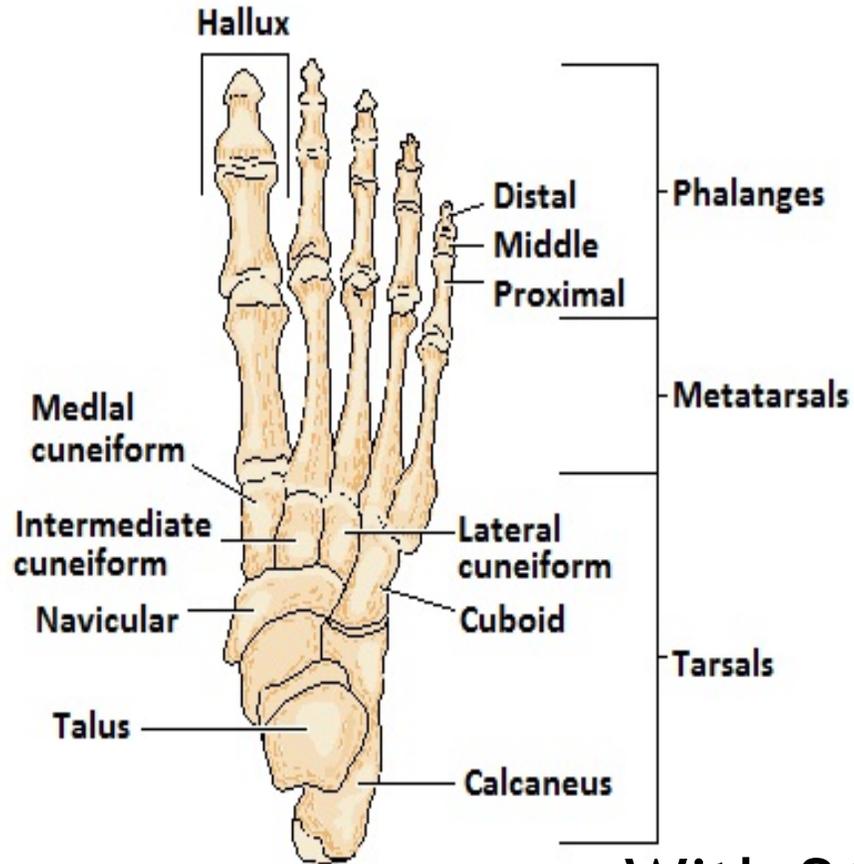
Understanding How Diabetes Affects Your Feet

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Why Is It Important To Take Care of Your Feet?

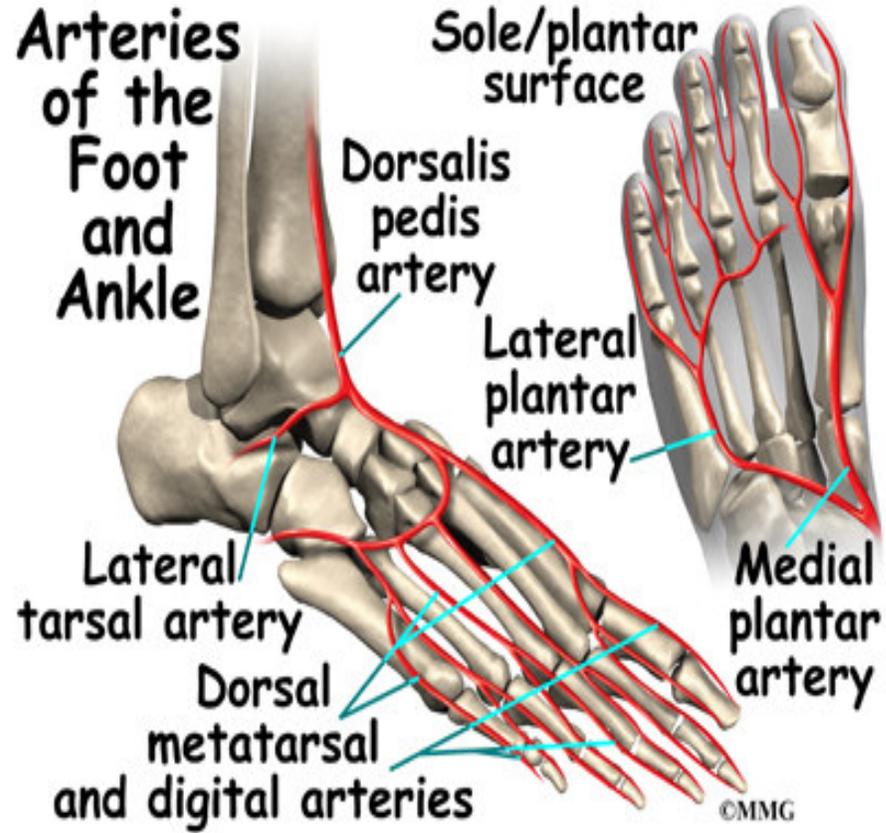
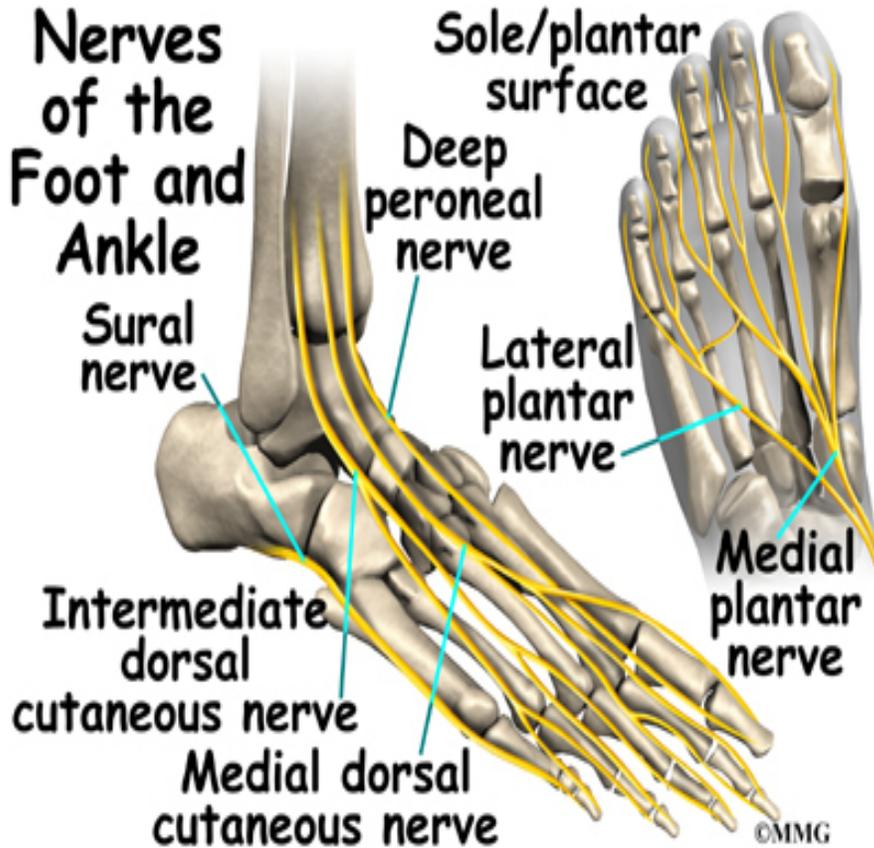
- If you have Diabetes you can slowly lose the feeling in your feet.
- Without feeling (protective sensation), you can have a sore and not realize it.
- Without appropriate treatment, small sores can turn into serious problems.
- Remember, your feet need to last a lifetime!

Let's Start at the Bottom



With 26 bones, what could go wrong?

Pathways to the Foot



Shifting Shape

healthy foot



charcot foot



A Charcot foot is a midfoot deformity that occurs as a result of distal neuropathy. It can happen to one foot or both of them. Midfoot collapse is described as “rocker bottom”.

A Painless Problem

Although the bony destruction can advance so that it limits the ability to walk, there is often no pain.



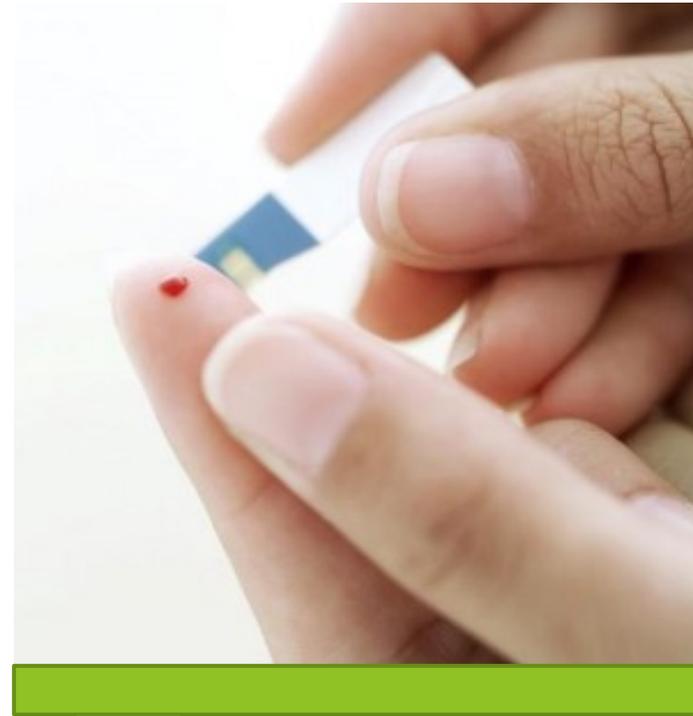
How can you take steps to prevent foot problems if you have diabetes?

These guidelines can help you get started



Maintain good glucose control

Daily management of blood sugar is important. It can assist in preventing future foot problems by helping the nerves and blood vessels that serve the feet stay healthy.



Look at your feet every day. Check for

- Blisters
- Cracks
- Red spots
- Sores or ulcers
- Cuts
- In-grown toenails



Avoid walking barefoot,
even at home!

After bathing, dry your feet well,
especially between the toes.

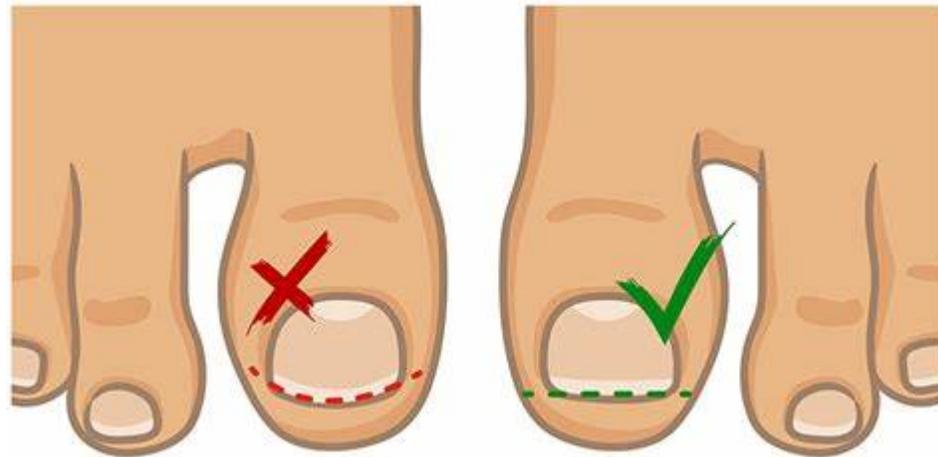


Moisturize your feet. Keep
the skin dry between your
toes.

If you can reach, see and feel your feet, trim your toenails regularly. Trim your toenails straight across and smooth the corners with an emery board or nail file. This helps keep the nails from growing into the skin.

Do NOT trim your own toenails if:

- You cannot see or feel your feet
- Your toenails are thick or yellowed
- Your toenails curve or grow into the skin



Wear shoes that protect your feet. Look inside your shoes before putting them on. Feel and shake out any foreign objects.



Shop for shoes in the afternoon to allow for normal daily swelling.

Light colored socks are best to wear. It is easier to see if there is any blood or drainage on your feet.



ALWAYS LOOK AT YOUR FEET AFTER PHYSICAL ACTIVITY!

Avoid cutting or shaving corns or calluses yourself. Don't use razor blades, corn plasters or liquid corn removers. They can damage your skin and lead to an infection.



With diabetes, injury to your feet may not be easy to heal!

Proper footwear is important

2 inch high heels put 57% more pressure on the balls of your feet than wearing flat shoes. That pressure increases to 76% with 3 inch heels.



Managing your diabetes and maintaining a healthy lifestyle helps keep your feet healthy.

This includes:

- Regular medical exams, including foot checks at every visit
- Monitoring your blood sugar daily and as recommended by your healthcare practitioner
- Eating a balanced diet including fruits and vegetables
- Regular exercise
- Don't smoke

Begin taking good care of your feet TODAY



Resources:

These books on general diabetes information and foot health are available at the Spartanburg County Public Libraries

- The Johns Hopkins Guide to Diabetes: For Patients and Families, 2014 edition by Christopher Saudek
- The Foot Book, 2011 edition by Rose & Martorana
- Mayo Clinic-The Essential Diabetes Book, 2009 edition by Maria Collago-Clavell

References

- American College of Physicians Diabetes Care Guide, 2007
- American Diabetes Association website www.diabetes.org
- Kingsford Podiatry Group Foot Clinic website www.kingsfordpodiatry.com.au
- Emory University WOCNEC Skin & Wound Module, February 2014
- Healthline website-Diabetes Foot Care www.healthline.com
- U.S. Department of Health & Human Services National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases website www.niddk.nih.gov