

# Providing foot care for someone else

Helping maintain Foot Health,  
Mobility and Quality of Life



Funded by

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**Your health professional details**



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# What To Do If You Notice A Foot Problem

## Red, hot & swollen skin



Red, hot and swollen skin can mean there is an infection. In some cases it can be painful but with diabetes this is not always the case.

Reviewing with a doctor is always a good idea to make sure there is nothing wrong.

## Thick nails



Thick and curly toenails can be hard to cut. Seeing a podiatrist may be helpful with this.

If attending appointments is difficult, a home visit podiatrist may be an option. You can ask your doctor for a referral.

## Wounds/lesions



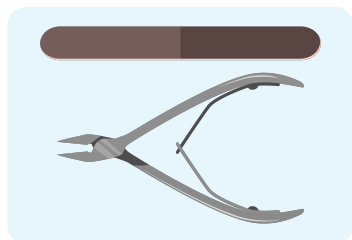
If you find wounds that are bleeding, or leaking pus see your doctor and/or podiatrist as soon as possible.

They may refer you to a High Risk Foot Service\* for specialist treatment.

*\*High Risk Foot Services are available for people with serious foot problems such as foot wounds (ulcers) and infections. Ask your local doctor or contact your local High Risk Foot Service for advice.*

This information has been written to help family and carers who provide foot care for someone that is unable to take care of their own feet.

## Foot care tools



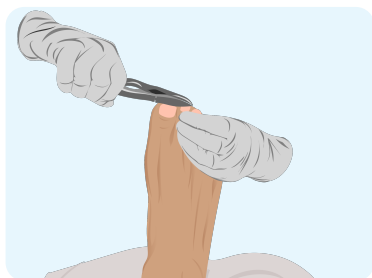
Put together a 'kit' with tools that should only be used for the person you are caring for.

Metal files or toe-nail clippers should be cleaned and dried after each treatment with warm water and detergent.

## Cutting and filing toenails

Make sure you have enough light so that you can see what you are doing.

Ask permission to cut or file the nails and ask what they would prefer.



### Cutting

- To cut the nails, make tiny cuts to begin and following the shape of the nail. Do not cut in one go
- The length of the nails should be slightly longer than the end of the toe
- Try not to cut down the sides of the nail, as you can leave a piece of nail, accidentally cut into the surrounding skin and cause discomfort



### Filing

- File the nail to remove rough edges, reduce thickness and length when people do not like nails being cut
- File downwards from the top



## Providing foot care for someone else

Foot care refers to what a healthy person would do for their own feet to keep them safe and comfortable. Providing foot care for someone else means you are doing the things they used to do:

- Checking for wounds or changes that could cause problems
- Keeping the feet clean
- Providing skin care
- Keeping the toenails trimmed and safe
- Helping with footwear and making sure they fit well
- Getting help quickly if you notice a problem\*

*\*High Risk Foot Services are available for people with serious foot problems such as foot ulcers and infections. See your local doctor or contact your local High Risk Foot Service for further help and advice.*

If you have consulted a podiatrist and there is specific advice for the person you are caring for, please make a note here:

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# Providing Foot Care



## Get comfortable

Face the person whose feet you are looking after and place their feet on a towel in your lap.

If they are bed-bound, ensure their legs are outstretched and their feet are close to the end of the bed for easier access.

## Check feet

Check each foot, looking between the toes, the top, bottom and heels.

Look for:

- Cuts, blood, sores
- Redness, swelling or bruising



## Wash the feet

Fill a basin with warm soapy water.

With the person sitting comfortably, place both feet in the water and:

- Wash between their toes
- Use a soft nail brush to gently rub over the nails
- Dry the whole foot – especially between the toes



## Protect the skin

Apply a non-perfumed cream every day.

Rub the cream all over the foot using small circular movements to massage the non-perfumed cream into the skin.

Do not put cream between the toes.



## Smelly or wet areas between the toes

At first you can wet a cotton bud or gauze with some methylated spirits and wipe between the toes.

If this does not solve the problem, consider showing your doctor or a podiatrist as the person may have a fungal infection.

## Footwear

Check that shoes/slippers are not too loose.

The shoes should match the shape of the foot.

Always wear clean socks, every day.

All shoes should have fastening (velcro/laces) to reduce the foot moving inside the shoe.

Shoes that move a lot when the person is walking can increase the risk of falls (e.g. thongs and slides).

