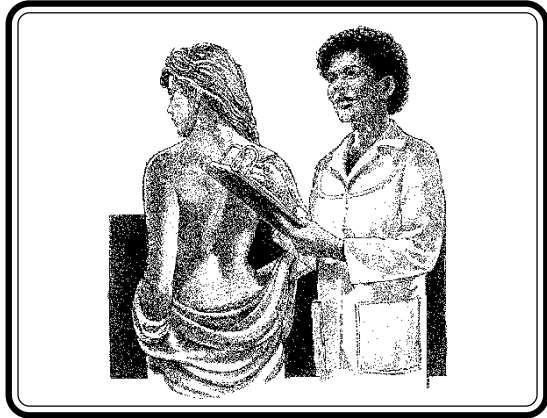


Your Health: Taking Control

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service • Oklahoma State University



SICK DAYS AND FOOT CARE WITH DIABETES

Sick Days

People with insulin-dependent diabetes need to plan ahead for sick days. Illness makes it more difficult to control blood glucose. It is important to work out a sick day plan with your physician or registered dietitian before you become ill.



Leg and Foot Care

Leg and foot problems are common among people with diabetes. These problems result from a combination of changes in the blood vessels and nerves.

Blood vessels may become narrowed by fatty deposits. This is seen more often and is often more severe among people with diabetes. Narrowing of the blood vessels reduces blood supply especially to the legs and feet. In addition, diabetes can dull nerves in these areas. As a result one might not notice a sore spot caused by tight shoes or by the pressure of walking. If such a spot is ignored, it can enlarge and become infected. Reduced blood supply from the narrowed blood vessels makes healing more difficult.

Proper foot care and regular visits to a doctor can prevent foot and leg sores and help ensure that sores which do appear will not become infected. Helpful measures include inspecting the feet daily for cuts or sore spots. Blisters and sore spots are less likely with shoes that fit well and socks or stockings that do not bind. Shoe inserts or “special” shoes can be used to prevent too much pressure on any one part of the foot.

A sore on the foot or leg, whether or not it is painful, requires a doctor’s immediate attention. Proper care of the feet and legs can prevent ulcers and infections and the more serious problems which may follow. Care should be taken to stop foot problems before they occur. Problems with the feet and legs are why people with diabetes have amputations more often than people without diabetes.

Suggested Readings:

Oklahoma State University Extension Fact Sheets:

T-3161, *Diet and Diabetes*

T-3138, *Dietary Fiber*

T-3142, *Dietary Salt*

T-3153, *Facts About Fat*

T-3154, *Facts About Cholesterol*

T-3157, *Sugar and Other Sweeteners*

T-3165, *Food Guide Pyramid: Guide to Daily Food Choices*

Reference List:

American Diabetes Association and American Dietetic Association. *The First Step In Diabetes Meal Planning*. 1995.

American Diabetes Association and American Dietetic Association. *Exchange List*. 1995.

American Diabetes Association. "Nutritional Recommendations and Principles for Individuals With Diabetes Mellitus." *Diabetes Care*, 13:18, 1990.



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***For more information, contact your OSU
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