

## Taking care of your Diabetic foot ulcer

If you have any of the following signs or symptoms, arrange an appointment in Podiatry or seek medical advice immediately- Walk in Centre, Out-of-hours service (dial 111):

**New wound, inflammation or infection signs of redness, pain, swelling, malodour, generally feeling unwell, temperature, chills, flu like symptoms**

### IMPORTANT PLEASE READ

You have a **Diabetic Foot Ulcer**. This is an area of skin which has broken open and the underlying tissue is exposed. As a person living with diabetes, you can be prone to developing ulceration even after only a minor injury and infections can take hold very quickly.

### What you can do to help?

- It is important that you look after yourself and your foot ulcer to assist with the healing process and to prevent infection occurring.
- Talk to the team that includes the diabetic specialist nurse about how you can help manage your diabetes, cholesterol and blood pressure
- **If you smoke, we encourage you to stop.** Smoking affects circulation which can lead to amputation. The Swindon Stop Smoking Service is free and helps many people to quit for good: call the Live well Swindon Hub 01793 465513
- It is important to keep the weight off the foot ulcer and you will be encouraged to non-weight bearing as much as possible as not to risk further harm
- You may be asked to wear a cast or walking boot or special shoe until your ulcer has healed.
- Keep checking your feet between appointments, following the care and advice you have been given about foot protection.
- Make sure you wear the correct footwear on the other foot as there will be more pressure on it which could cause a further problem.

You will need intensive treatment over the coming weeks and sometimes months. A treatment plan will be developed with you, by the diabetic foot team to best meet your needs. This may involve a team of health care professionals including the hospital diabetic foot team, your GP practice, practice nurse, community nurse and community podiatry.

### Specific advice:

This link has some very useful information on helping support you to manage your diabetes.

<http://www.swindondiabetes.co.uk/support/healthy-feet/>

Always attend your appointments for examination, treatment and re-dressing of the ulcer. You may be required to take antibiotics if there are signs of an infection in the wound or nearby tissue.



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## Advice and checklist to look after your diabetic foot ulcer

- Only ever remove the dressing and replace it if you have been shown how to do this properly and have suitable replacement dressings.
- **Keep the dressing dry and clean.** Getting the dressing wet can prevent healing and allow bacteria to enter the ulcer which will cause an infection.
- **Continue to check your feet daily.** Look for any more problem areas or danger signs, something that was not there the day before.
- **Moisturise the surrounding area of your feet-** If your skin is dry apply moisturising cream daily, avoiding areas of broken skin and the areas between the toes. Speak to your health care professional about using a skin wash to surrounding skin on legs and feet
- **Rest as much as possible** and keep your foot up to help the healing process -Avoid any unnecessary standing or walking.

## Danger Signs

Wounds can change and deteriorate very quickly. You should pay close attention to any of the following danger signs when checking your feet.

- Is there any new pain or throbbing?
- Is your foot swelling?
- Is there an increase in temperature in your foot?
- Are there any new areas of redness or inflammation?
- Is there any pus present?
- How do you feel in yourself?
- Do you have any flu like symptoms?

## Should you have enquiries about your appointments you can contact the following: Monday to Friday 9-5pm

- **Osprey Outpatients Department Tel: 01793 604050**  
Great Western Hospital, NHS Foundation Trust, Marlborough Road, SN3 6BB
- **Community Podiatry Services -Podiatry reception: 01793 607860**  
Swindon NHS Health Centre, Islington Street, Swindon SN1 2DQ
- **Wiltshire Community Podiatry- [WHC.AdminPodiatry@nhs.net](mailto:WHC.AdminPodiatry@nhs.net) -Podiatry**  
Service office: 01249 456635

## Out of Hours 01793 646436

The single point of access will be able to take and pass on a message for the diabetic foot team on your behalf. The diabetic foot team will aim to respond to the message on the next working day. The single point of access cannot deal with appointment enquiries.

### **If you are worried about a deteriorating foot do not wait seek medical advice.**

From 1st January 2019 smoking will not be permitted on any NHS site in England. Smoking will not be permitted within any of our buildings or anywhere outside on our sites. Smoking facilities will not be provided. Please be considerate of others when vaping in hospital grounds.

**This information sheet is available to order in other languages and formats. If you would like a copy, please contact us on 01793 604031 or email [gwh.pals@nhs.net](mailto:gwh.pals@nhs.net)**

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