

Patient Foot Instructions

Your orthotist or prosthetist can help you to ensure that you are taking proper care of your feet. The following guidelines may be useful if you have feet that are especially prone to irritation or injury. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your orthotist, prosthetist, or physician.

1. Do not go barefoot, even in the house. This includes nighttime restroom visits.
2. Inspect your feet daily for bruises, blisters, cuts, scratches, and skin breakdown between the toes. Have open lesions checked by your physician.
3. Wash your feet daily with mild soap and dry gently. Apply petroleum jelly (Vaseline) or lanolin to hold in moisture.
4. Avoid extremes of temperature. If you have decreased sensation in your hands or feet, have someone assist you in testing bath water or other situations where your extremities may be at risk.
5. Do not perform “bathroom surgery” on corns or callouses with razor blades or chemical agents. See your physician for their removal.
6. Do not use external heat if your feet are cold. Heating pads, hot water bottles, and other devices can be dangerous. Use down booties or comforters to conserve body heat. Your physician may choose to treat you with warm soaks under their direction.
7. Wear properly fitted shoes. If your toes are clawed and additional pads are necessary, a shoe with a deep toe box is essential to accommodate them. Avoid pointed shoes.
8. Break shoes in gradually. Take off new shoes after an hour and inspect your feet for red areas. If your eyesight is poor, have another person do this for you.
9. Inspect the insides of your shoes daily for foreign objects, sharp edges, torn linings, and bunching of shoe material.
10. Wear stockings that are big enough. Socks with elastic materials can produce pressure areas. Avoid seamed or mended socks.
11. Do not wear circular garters or roll down the tops of stockings. Use a garter belt for suspension.
12. If your physician allows you to trim your nails, do not cut your nails in a curved manner at the corners. Cut your nails straight across, and use an emery board for the final smoothing of corners. See your physician for any sign of redness in the nail grooves.
13. Be sure that anyone caring for your feet knows that you have decreased sensation in your feet.
14. Be sure that your feet are examined by your physician at each visit.