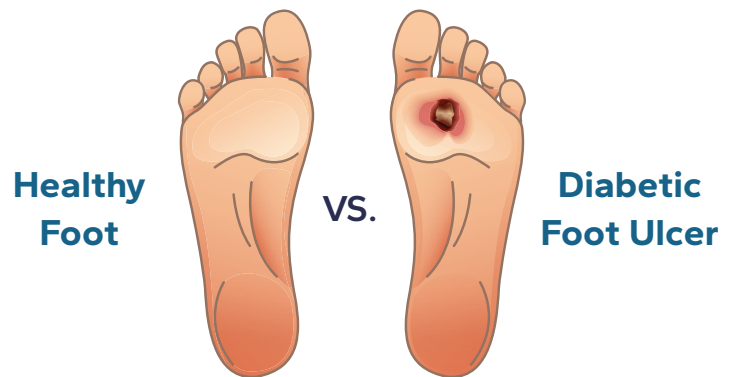


# Diabetic Foot Ulcer



## What is a diabetic foot ulcer?

A diabetic foot ulcer is a wound anywhere on the foot (including the toes) of a person with diabetes (a condition meaning there is too much sugar in the blood).



## What causes a diabetic foot ulcer?

Nerve damage to the feet and decreased blood flow can cause a diabetic foot ulcer. This may lead to loss of feeling, making it possible to injure the foot without realizing it. Additionally, poorly fitting shoes and nerve damage may also affect skin moisture which can cause dryness, peeling, and cracking or more ulcers.

## What is offloading a diabetic foot ulcer?

Offloading is using special footwear or devices to relieve pressure from your diabetic foot ulcer during walking. If your healthcare provider suggests that you offload, you should not walk on the infected limb without a good offloading device.

## How should you care for your diabetic foot ulcer?

Diabetic foot ulcers need special care and treatment to prevent infection and to help them heal. We recommend the following ways to care for your diabetic foot ulcer:



**Keep the area clean**  
by gently washing with  
mild soap and water



**Apply treatment**  
to the wound to help  
keep the wound moist



**Cover the wound**  
with a dressing to  
help heal and protect  
from germs



**Wear protective shoes**  
to take the pressure  
off the foot and toes

## How do you prevent diabetic foot ulcers?

- Inspect your feet daily including the bottoms and between the toes (using a mirror as needed) and look for red spots, cracks, blisters, calluses, or other new changes
- Inspect your shoes daily to check for objects like small pebbles that might be stuck inside
- Wear properly fitting shoes and socks that keep your feet dry
- Take medicines as prescribed, eat a well-balanced diet, and maintain a healthy weight to reduce your risk of developing a foot ulcer

## What activities I should avoid?



**Smoking** nicotine, tobacco, or similar products



**Exposing** your feet to extreme temperatures



**Removing or Picking** scabs or dry skin



**Soaking** your feet in hot water



**Trimming** ingrown or thick toenails

## When should I call for help?

**If you notice any of the following symptoms:**

- Fevers, chills, nausea, or vomiting
- Unusual increase in blood sugar level
- Increased pain that does not go away
- Redness in and around the wound
- Leg, foot, or toes are warm to touch
- Swelling in the leg, foot, or toes
- Increased or unusual wound drainage or odor



## Have Questions or Need Help?

Talk with your Clinical Care Team. **Call 1-833-ESPERTA (1-833-377-3782).**

If this is an emergency, go to your nearest hospital or call 911.

1. Bryant, R.A., & Nix, D.P. (2024). Acute and chronic wounds: current management concepts. 6th. edition. Elsevier.

2. Wound Reference Inc. (2024). <https://woundreference.com/app/>