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DIABETES AND YOUR FEET

You may have heard that diabetics need to be careful as far as their feet are concerned. That is true. But do you know why?

One reason is because diabetes is a disease that can affect the small blood vessels. Where are there a lot of small blood vessels in the body? In the eyes, kidneys, and feet. That is why those particular areas can be affected by diabetes.

In the feet, the small blood vessels supply the small nerves. If the small blood vessels do not nourish the small nerves in the feet, then the small nerves can gradually stop working so that diabetics can lose sensation in their feet. This does not happen with every diabetic.

It occurs more in diabetics who have very high blood glucose levels.

Whether a diabetic patient has sensation in their feet or not at present, I advise them to pretend like they have no feeling in their feet and act accordingly.

There are four things to remember that are based on common sense. These things take very little time out of your day. The premis, I don't have feeling in my feet so there are things I should and shouldn't do.

There are two **DO's** and two **DON'T's**.

The **DON'T's** are:

1. Don't go barefoot. Why? Because you could step on something and not realize it because you didn't feel it until you see a trail of blood on the floor.
2. Don't put your feet in hot water or use a heating pad on your feet. Why? Because you can burn your feet and not know it.

The **DO's** are:

1. Do check your feet visually on a daily basis. You are looking for cuts, redness, swelling or anything else that appears abnormal.
2. Do check your shoes before you put them on. One diabetic forgot that he left his watch in his golf shoes, played a round of golf, and ended up with a skin ulcer that took months to heal. It may not be a watch, but it could be a coin, paper clip, or even a small pebble.

If you keep your glucose under control, exercise, and don't smoke cigarettes, most of the time, diabetics can have their feet last a lifetime.