THE ROLE OF THE FOOT NURSE

**Prevention**
- promote the maintenance of healthy feet

**Advocate**
- promote foot health and mobility
- promote community resources
- promote family involvement

**Treatment**
Nursing foot care includes:
- a nursing health assessment including an assessment of the foot and lower extremities
- nail cutting & filing
- management and care of corns, calluses and ingrown toe nails
- working with clients to put together a plan that is focused on preventative measures to promote self care
- ongoing nursing assessment and evaluation
- identifying the need for more specialized treatments and referring to the appropriate resources (ie: Podiatrist, Pedorthist)

**Education**
- providing clients and caregivers with information specific to foot care, changes to the foot, footwear, the importance of exercise and proper nutrition
- providing appropriate educational handouts

TIPS FOR HEALTHY FEET

**Do**
- wear proper fitting shoes that are supportive.
- walk. It’s a great way to increase circulation, prevent blood clots and keep your bones and muscles healthy.
- buy shoes in the late afternoon because your feet may swell during the day.
- wash and dry your feet well, especially between the toes.

**Do**
- check your feet daily for cuts, bruises and blisters.

**Don’t**
- wear tight socks, elastics or knee-high stockings that restrict circulation.
- go barefoot, even indoors.
- put hot water bottles or heating pads on your feet.
- cross your legs.
- smoke because smoking decreases circulation and healing, and significantly increases the risk of amputation.
- ignore foot pain.
- use over-the-counter medications to treat corns, calluses and warts.
- treat your own ingrown toe nails, calluses or corns with scissors or a razor.

Find a Foot Care Nurse [www.mafcn.ca](http://www.mafcn.ca)

DIABETES & FOOT CARE

Nursing foot care keeps you active and on your feet

Find a Foot Care Nurse [www.mafcn.ca](http://www.mafcn.ca)
Why is foot care important?
Although most people are born with healthy feet, as we grow older, three out of four Canadians will develop a foot problem that requires medical attention.

- Regular foot care plays an important role in keeping you healthy and remaining active.
- Feet that are healthy and pain free help you to keep your balance, which may prevent falls.
- Foot related problems may result in a loss of independence and well-being.

A percentage of nursing foot care services may be covered by some health insurance plans including extended Blue Cross, Great West Life, Sunlife, and DVA. Receipts are issued and may be applied to the medical expense portion of your personal income tax.

Diabetes and Foot Care
Diabetes is a metabolic disorder in which the body either cannot produce insulin or cannot effectively use the insulin it produces. Over three million Canadians have diabetes and many are unaware they have it. Foot and lower leg complications account for many hospital admissions for people with diabetes. Diabetes can cause damage to the circulation and nerve function of the feet and lower legs. Blood flow to the feet and lower legs can be severely decreased. Neuropathy is the gradual loss of nerve function/sensation in the feet and lower legs and is the main cause of most diabetic foot problems. Neuropathy can cause numbness, pain, burning and tingling in the feet. If people with diabetes lose the feeling in their feet, they may not sense when an injury occurs. A small seemingly innocent cut, if left untreated can cause infection and lead to serious complications including amputation.

Prevention/ What Can I Do?
Regular foot care is key to the prevention and detection of foot related complications associated with diabetes. The foot care provider plays an important role in assessing people who may be at risk.

- Maintain good blood sugar control
- Make healthy lifestyles choices
- Daily inspection of your feet, check for reddened skin, sores, blisters or swelling
- Wear proper fitting footwear and hosiery
- Avoid going barefoot or wearing open-toed sandals
- Protect your feet from heat and cold
- Cut toe nails straight across
- Seek smoking cessation programs
- Avoid alcohol
- Moisturize feet regularly
- See your health care provider regularly to monitor your diabetes
- DO NOT use hot water bottles or heating pads on your feet
- AVOID use of over the counter medicated corn/callus/wart preparations

Do you have diabetes, circulation problems, numbness in your feet? Do you have difficulty seeing or reaching your feet? If you answer YES to any one of these, you are encouraged to seek assistance in foot care rather than attempting to do it yourself.