



Healthy Living Digest



Better Health Winter Issue

Winter Foot Care for Diabetics

Diabetic foot care is always important, but winter can make keeping your feet healthy an even bigger challenge, considering the health threats like numbness and decreased circulation. Winter moisture, cold, and dryness increase the risk of a diabetes foot problem. About 15 to 20 percent of people with diabetes end up in the hospital because of a foot ulcer or infection, and in some cases these foot problems can lead to amputation.

Here are tips to know...

Inspect your feet everyday

Inspect for any breaks in the skin, discharge, changes in color, changes in odor, and painful corns or calluses.

Pick the right footwear

When you have diabetes, winter cold and dampness combined with decreased circulation can increase your risk for a foot ulcer. Make sure winter shoes and boots provide warmth, protection from harsh weather conditions.

Moisturizing is a must

Diabetes nerve damage and poor circulation can cause decreased function of the moisturizing glands of your feet. Ask your doctor to recommend a good moisturizer for diabetic foot care, and use it after washing your feet every day.

Trim your toenails

Untrimmed or infected toenails are a frequent cause of infections and ulcers. Nails that are thick, crumbly, or discolored may need professional care. Medicare may cover nail care as part of diabetic foot care if you have a history of problems caused by nails.

Control Blood Sugar

Keeping your diabetes under good control is an important part of diabetic foot care. Your feet absorb a lot of the daily wear and tear of your body. They are one of the first places poor diabetic control will show up. Take control of your health!

Signs of Heart Disease Women Overlook

If you're like most women, you're probably so busy taking care of everyone else, your own wellbeing and health tends to fall last. Heart disease is the leading killer of women in America. Each year more women die of heart disease than men, yet heart disease and related risk factors are often missed in women. Symptoms of coronary artery disease and heart attack, for example, are often different in women than their male counterparts. Women are also less likely to receive optimal treatment for certain heart conditions. Women are more likely than men to have heart attack symptoms unrelated to chest pain, such as:

- Neck, jaw, shoulder, upper back or abdominal discomfort
- Shortness of breath
- Right arm pain
- Nausea or vomiting
- Sweating
- Lightheadedness or dizziness
- Unusual fatigue

Coronary artery disease is caused by the gradual buildup of plaque on the inside of the coronary arteries. Over time, the plaque deposits grow large enough to narrow the arteries' inside channels, decreasing blood flow to the heart. Even though heart disease tends to strike later in life, it can happen at any age. There are things about being a woman that can make you more prone to heart problems (for example, menopause and hormones).

Learn about your risk for heart disease. You can help protect your heart by adopting heart-healthy habits—for example, by exercising, eating right, getting enough rest, not smoking and paying attention to your health in general.



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Sodium and its link to Hypertension

For many, but not all, reduction in sodium intake is very important. The American Heart Association's 2010 guidelines state that Americans should reduce sodium intake to less than 1500 mg daily. It is often hard for people to add up milligrams but realizing what foods are high in sodium, reading food labels, and not using the salt shaker can help.

To decrease sodium in your diet, consider these tips:

Track how much salt is in your diet. Keep a food diary to estimate how much sodium is in what you eat and drink each day.

Read food labels. If possible, choose low-sodium alternatives of the foods and beverages you normally buy.

Eat fewer processed foods. Potato chips, frozen dinners, bacon and processed lunch meats are high in sodium.

Don't add salt. Just 1 level teaspoon of salt has 2,300 mg of sodium. Use herbs or spices, rather than salt, to add more flavor to your foods.

Ease into it. If you don't feel like you can drastically reduce the sodium in your diet suddenly, cut back gradually. Your palate will adjust over time.

Nearly one in three adults—almost 65 million Americans—suffers from hypertension, or high blood pressure. High blood pressure leads to more than half of all heart attacks, strokes and heart failure cases in the United States. It also increases the risk of kidney failure, blindness and other serious health consequences.

Recognizing the Signs of Stroke

Stroke is an emergency and getting help and treatment is extremely important. Learn how to quickly identify stroke by using the **FAST test**.

FACE: Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop?

ARMS: Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

SPEECH: Ask the person to repeat a simple phrase. Is their speech slurred or strange?

TIME: If you observe any of these signs, call 9-1-1 immediately.

Getting to a hospital rapidly will more likely lead to a better recovery. Note the time of the first symptom. This information is important and can affect treatment decisions.

Curried Butternut Squash Soup

1 tablespoon olive oil
1 medium onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 1/2 pounds butternut squash, peeled, seeded and cut into 1-inch cubes
2 cups low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth
1 tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons curry powder
2 tablespoons honey
3 tablespoons plain nonfat yogurt

Preparation: Heat oil over medium heat in a 6-quart stockpot. Add onions and sauté until they begin to soften, about 5 minutes. Add garlic and sauté for 2 minutes more. Add squash, broth, curry powder, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer uncovered until squash is tender, 12 to 15 minutes. Remove from heat, stir in honey, and puree with a mixer or in batches in a blender until smooth. Ladle into serving bowls and drizzle yogurt over each serving.

Calories: 221

Serving Size: 5

Cook Time: 30 minutes

Information: Please visit www.primarypartners.org in order to learn more tips to staying healthy.