

## HEALTHY LIFESTYLE FOR HEALTHY FEET

Reduce your risk of foot complications from diabetes by following these healthy living recommendations:

### Control blood sugar levels

It's important to keep your blood sugar levels in your target range as often as possible to help prevent or delay foot complications. Staying in your target range can also help improve your energy and mood. Speak to your diabetes educator to learn about what your blood sugar goals are.



### Manage high blood pressure

For most people living with diabetes, the goal is less than 130/80 mmHg. High blood pressure causes heart disease and damages blood vessels throughout your body, including the ones in your feet. Without a sufficient supply of blood, your feet are at risk for problems, including ulcers that can lead to amputation. Have your blood pressure checked at diabetes visits.

### Manage cholesterol levels

LDL or "bad" cholesterol can build up and clog your blood vessels. Plaque and cholesterol buildup can damage arteries causing the flow of blood to be limited or cut off. This can affect your feet by resulting in foot problems such as swelling, cramping, nerve pain and ulcers. Speak to your primary care provider about options to support your vascular health.

### Quit smoking

Smoking can cause less blood to flow to your feet. This makes it harder for any sores or ulcers on your feet or legs to heal, increasing the risk of amputation. If you smoke or use other tobacco products, take steps to quit. The Bancroft Community Family Health Team offers programs to help you quit smoking. Call 613-332-1565 extension 220 to book.



### Be physically active



Physical activity can help to control blood sugar levels and improve blood flow to your feet. The goal is to move your body for 150 minutes each week with moderate-intensity activity. Physical activity can be done in 20-25 minutes sessions every day. Moderate-intensity activity works your large muscles, increases your heart rate, and makes you breathe harder. Examples include walking at a brisk pace, biking, swimming, dancing, household chores or playing sports.

### Eat a healthy diet

Diabetes is better managed with healthy eating. Diabetes Canada recommends eating more vegetables, lean animal proteins, low-fat cheese, eggs, dried beans and peas, and choosing olive and canola oil and nuts as healthier fat choices. Eat small portions of grains and starches, like rice, potato or bread, and a serving of fruit or yogurt at meals.

