

HIGH-RISK FOOT

HPE OHT LOWER LIMB PRESERVATION DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

Your foot exam shows that you may have had an ulcer, open sore or amputation, and have a lack of feeling or poor blood flow in your feet. This is putting you at **HIGH RISK** of developing a foot ulcer again.

REMEMBER: Scar tissue is weak. Wherever you have had an open sore or amputation, carefully watch the skin for a repeat of wound. It can take up to 18 months for the skin to fully heal.

See your health care provider right away if you have:

- New or worsening pain in your legs or feet
- Cold, blue or pale feet, with or without pain
- Swollen, red and hot feet, with or without pain
- An open sore or swollen area that is draining, EVEN IF IT DOES NOT HURT

There are steps you can take to help reduce your risk of developing an ulcer:

Check your feet daily

Look at the top, bottom and between all your toes on both feet. Have a family member check your feet or use a mirror if you are unable to check yourself.

Wash your feet daily

After washing, be sure to dry them well, especially between your toes.

Be aware of temperature

Avoid soaking your feet in hot water and do not apply heat directly to your feet.

Apply cream

Lotion can be applied to the top and bottom of both feet but NOT BETWEEN your toes.

Seek professional nail care

This can be a nurse, chiropodist or podiatrist who cuts your toenails and assesses your feet for problems.

Wear well-fitted footwear

Avoid wearing worn-out shoes or boots that may be injuring your feet. Customized footwear provided by a professional chiropodist, pedorthist or orthotist can help to treat or prevent ulcers.

Check your socks and shoes

Before putting on your socks or shoes, check for anything inside. Always wear socks.

REMEMBER: Have your feet checked **every 1-3 months** by your healthcare team.

HIGH-RISK FOOT WITH A WOUND

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If you have an open wound, you will be referred to a chiropodist, doctor or nurse practitioner. In the meantime, you should:

1. Minimize walking on your foot.
2. Keep the wound dry, clean and covered. If the dressing is wet, change it. For more information, check out *Caring for Your Wound at Home: Changing a Dressing* by Wounds Canada.*

<https://www.woundscanada.ca/patient-or-caregiver/resources/care-at-home-series>

Recognize the signs and symptoms of an infection:

- There is more drainage, or the colour has changed
- The skin around the wound is red and warm
- There is a bad smell after cleaning the wound
- There is new or worsening pain
- The wound is a yellow or black in colour.
- The wound is getting bigger
- The wound is bleeding

If you have two or more of these signs, STOP WALKING ON YOUR FOOT and see your doctor or chiropodist as soon as possible, or go to the emergency department.

**Disclaimer: The content in this resource and the suggested resource are for informational purposes only and are NOT a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. You should always consult with your health-care professional before starting any new treatment or changing or stopping an existing treatment (Wounds Canada, 2020).*