

Q - Who will benefit from the Foot Care Pathway?

A - This pathway is for adults living with Diabetes in Northern Ireland. Children are managed by their hospital Diabetes team and do not require annual foot checks until the age of 18.

Q - What is the Regional Foot Care Pathway?

The Pathway offers an improved service for adults living with Diabetes. It offers all adults with diabetes access to the same services no matter where they live in Northern Ireland. It consists of 4 steps including annual foot care screening through to advanced foot disease care and treatment with a focus on the prevention of ulcers and amputations which will ultimately reduce hospital admissions.

Q – Why is foot care so important for people with diabetes?

A- The presence of high blood glucose levels over a long period of time may result in a condition called diabetic neuropathy (damage to the nerves) or loss of circulation in the extremities of the body.

If the nerves in your feet or legs are damaged, your feet can lose sensation and become numb. It is relatively common for people with diabetes to not feel foot problems until they have developed, therefore it is key to ensure you have regular foot examinations.

If you do not get these problems treated, they could lead to foot ulcers, infection and at worse amputations.

Q - How do I go about getting my feet checked?

A - You can contact your local Foot Protection Team directly by phone or speak to your GP who will refer you to the appropriate service on the Pathway

Q - Where are the Enhanced Foot Protection Teams based and what is different about them?

A – The Enhanced Foot Protection teams provide specialist support for complex foot problems. There are Enhance Foot Protection teams at Altnagelvin, Ulster, Causeway, Antrim, South West Acute, Daisy Hill, and Craigavon Hospitals.

Q - Who will refer me to the Enhanced Foot Protection Team?

A - Your local Foot Protection Team, GP or nurse can refer you directly to your nearest Enhanced Foot Protection Team.

Q - How long will I be attending the Enhanced Foot Protection Team ?

This varies from patient to patient depending on the nature of the foot problems encountered by the team.

Q - What is the Multi-Disciplinary Diabetic Foot Team?

A - This team is based in the Royal Victoria Hospital. This regional team includes specialists in vascular disease (examining-your blood flow), Diabetologists (reviewing your diabetes)

Podiatry, Orthopaedics and Orthotist (specialised footwear).

Q - Why am I being referred to the Multidisciplinary Diabetes Foot Team? Am I at risk of amputation?

If you develop more complex foot problems you will be referred to the Multi-disciplinary Diabetes Foot Care team. Most foot problems can be prevented. Unfortunately, if your feet are not treated this could lead to more serious foot ulcers, infection and at worse amputations.

Q – What can I do to improve my own foot care?

A- Keep a close check on your feet and report any problems to your local Foot Protection Team as soon as possible.

Diabetes UK web site has very helpful information on how to do this

<https://www.diabetes.org.uk/guide-to-diabetes/complications/feet/taking-care-of-your-feet>