

Diabetic Foot



Overview

This term is used to describe foot problems that stem from diabetes. These problems can be difficult to treat.

Causes

Diabetes changes your body in ways that can cause diabetic foot. It can damage your nervous system, which can cause you to lose feeling in your feet. You may not feel hot, cold or painful sensations. You could injure your foot without realizing it. Diabetes can also damage your circulatory system. This results in poor blood flow to your feet. It makes it harder for your body to fight off disease. With diabetes, you may not notice a small cut or sore on your foot, and it can become severely infected.

Symptoms

Symptoms associated with nerve and circulation problems may include sensations of pain or new or lasting numbness. Your skin may become hard and shiny. Hair may stop growing on your legs and feet. You may have trouble walking. If you have a foot infection, you may have swelling, redness and warm skin. You may develop open sores. You may have fever and chills. You may notice red streaks on your skin that spread away from the infection.

Treatment

Treatment options depend on the severity of your problems. A healthier lifestyle can help keep your diabetes in control. You may benefit from a change in footwear and from better foot hygiene. Inspect your feet daily, and have regular foot exams to take care of minor problems before they become major ones. Your healthcare provider can create a care plan that is right for your needs.