Feet and Beyond

A NEWSLETTER FROM A CNY DIABETES CERTIFIED FOOT CARE NURSE

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In this issue, we will explore shoe sizing and fitting.

- Foot measurement
- Shoe fitting
- Feet and diabetes.

In general, about 80 percent of the population is wearing the wrong sized shoes! Shoe fittings are an art that takes some experience, and the right tools. There is no standardization of shoe sizing in the United States, so a size eight in one brand is not necessarily the same size in another brand. There can be a difference between sizes as much one-third to one-sixth inches.

The most used measuring tool for shoe sizing is the Brannock Device® because it measures three areas of the foot: toe length, width and arch length. Arch length is extremely important – this measurement confirms your new shoes flex at the right place at the ball of your foot. A Brannock Device is made to the manufactures specifications, so you may need to make sure you have the right device for the right brand shoe. Both feet should be measured each time you buy a new pair of shoes, and preferably at the end of the day. You should be standing if able and wearing socks you typically wear with your heel to the back of the heel cup of the Brannock Device. Your foot size can change with age, weight changes and other factors, so you should have your feet sized each time you buy a new pair of shoes.

Correctly fitting footwear can prevent long-term foot problems, especially for people with diabetes. Many people with diabetes can experience loss of protective sensation and not even realize shoes are rubbing or creating the potential for small cuts or sores. Everyone with or without diabetes should follow the shoe break-in policy:

1. The first time in your new shoes, wear them (with socks on) for only 30 to 60 minutes, preferably on carpeted surface.
2. Next, remove your shoes and socks and look for any areas of redness on your feet (ask a family member to look for you if you need help).
3. Once you determine there are no areas of redness, wear your new shoes around your house for another day or two, again checking for any areas of redness.
4. If there are no areas of redness after two days, you are ready to wear them outside your home.
5. Remember, regardless of the break-in period you should check the skin of your feet daily to be sure there are no areas of redness or pressure from your shoes.

Do not continue to wear shoes that hurt you or appear to create red areas. Shoes that hurt when you try them on the first time should not be worn as there is greater potential for cuts or sores on the feet that may be difficult to heal. Being fitted for and wearing the right size shoes can prevent severe complications to your feet.

MVHS

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