

20 - Diabetic foot

Diabetic foot is a very common, but difficult to treat, chronic complication of diabetes.

It can bring serious risks, such as difficulties walking, minor amputations (of the toes) or major amputations (of the foot, lower leg or whole limb).

How it presents



Diabetic neuropathy can reduce the capacity to feel pain, which can result in neglecting minor injuries, cuts or wounds that can become infected and get worse.



Obstructive arterial disease in the lower limbs, another complication of diabetes, decreases the amount of blood circulating in the legs.



The reduction in blood flow to the lower limbs is very painful and prevents foot sores and infections from healing.

Helpful tips



People with diabetes should never walk barefoot and should wear cotton socks and comfortable shoes.



Carefully check your feet for cuts, wounds, and red, hot or swollen areas every day.



Wash your feet every day with lukewarm water. Avoid prolonged footbaths, which macerate the skin, and disinfectants and acids, which damage it.



Dry your feet carefully, especially between the toes. Keep away from radiators, heaters and fireplaces.



Cut your toenails following their natural shape, without cutting them too short or leaving sharp corners. It is advisable to use a blunt emery board.



Do not treat even minor calluses, cuts and sores yourself. Have a specialist examine any wounds and seek medical advice.