

ARTHRITIS OR JOINT STIFFNESS

It is recommended that everyone keeps as mobile as possible and take regular exercise to keep joints supple.

If you have difficulty bending to cut your toenails you might want to try putting your foot on a stair or small stool and bend over the knee to cut nails. This should put minimal pressure on your hips and knees. (Not recommended for patients attending Chronic Pain Clinic).

It is often easier to use a long handled emery board/file to keep your nails under control. If you file your nails everyday you will never need to cut them. Exercising a little every day.

DIABETES

Some patients hear that if they have diabetes they cannot care for their own feet. This is **not true** and you are recommended to pay more attention to your feet.

All patients should check their feet everyday for cuts, redness or any major change and report these to your nearest clinic.

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You can still maintain your own foot care as before but you will be given regular education at your annual diabetes assessment where a member of the podiatry team will assess your needs.

Need assistance to cut your toenails?

Footcare Fife is a toenail cutting service for people who struggle to cut their own nails.

Poor footcare can lead to various health complications which can easily be prevented with regular care. Telephone 0800 389 6046 for more information.

NHS Fife provides accessible communication in a variety of formats including for people who are speakers of community languages, who require Easy Read versions, who speak BSL, read Braille or use Audio formats.

NHS Fife SMS text service number 07805800005 is available for people who have a hearing or speech impairment.

To find out more about accessible formats contact:

fife-UHB.EqualityandHumanRights@nhs.net or
phone 01592 729130

Further patient information leaflets are available online on our website www.nhsfife.org/



PODIATRY DEPARTMENT



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OVERCOMING THE OBSTACLES

Many patients find various difficulties in looking after their own foot care. This leaflet has been designed to help you overcome some of these obstacles.

FOOT HYGIENE

Washing and drying your own feet can sometimes be difficult due to being unable to reach them easily and take care of them properly.

You can purchase a toe cleaner from various home catalogues. Back brushes are ideal for helping you wash your feet as the long handle saves you from having to stoop. A hair drier can be used to dry your feet without any bending. Sometimes it is easier to get a family member to help.

Sponge mops, used for doing the washing up make washing your feet easier. They are also good for putting cream on to your feet. Put a little cream on the sponge and hold the end of the handle then massage the cream into the soles and top of the feet.

POOR VISION

Instead of using scissors or nail clippers file them regularly. Do this before you put your socks on in the morning. Do not spend a long time filing nails as a quick few seconds daily is enough to keep your nails at bay.

TYPES OF FOOTWEAR

If you find lacing shoes difficult to tie Velcro fastenings will still hold the foot firmly in the shoe but are easier to put on.

Training shoes are light weight and can often be found with Velcro fastening and have a good sole which aids comfort. Training shoes do not suit everyone especially if you have a muscle weakness in your legs as you are more prone to tripping (ie stroke, neurological problems).

If you have problems with your feet or have difficulty walking, flat lacing shoes are best as they will provide you with the greatest amount of support. Sometimes they can be difficult to put on so try using a long handled shoe horn.

Elastic laces can also be helpful, as you can tie your laces whilst the shoe is on your lap then put them on just like a slip on shoe as the elastic in the laces will stretch.

WEIGHT

Being overweight puts a great deal of strain on your feet and legs. It can also make it difficult to reach your feet. It may also make certain medical conditions worse and lead to other problems. Most GP surgeries run a weight loss program to benefit your whole body and general health.

There are also slimming clubs you may wish to try. Keeping your weight under control will help both your general and foot health.

DRY/HARD SKIN

Using the advice given in this leaflet you will be able to look after dry or hard skin. A long handled emery board or pumice stone will help keep hard skin at bay.

It is better to file the skin gently but regularly rather than waiting until there is a large area of skin which needs to be removed.

Again using a sponge mop will help you to apply cream to your feet.

POST OPERATIVE HIP SURGERY

Bending your hip past 90 degrees is not recommended within the first 6 weeks following a hip replacement, however, after this time most activities can be performed normally.

BREATHLESSNESS/DIZZINESS

Nail cutting can be difficult if you suffer from breathlessness. Not all nails require to be cut on the same day. Instead of bending down to reach your feet bring your feet up. Putting your foot on a stool or step is often easier.