

Caring for your feet

This leaflet covers how you, your family member, or your carer can manage your general footcare by yourself.

Personal Footcare Kit

The following is a list of equipment that can help you to manage your footcare.

- Nail Nippers
- Emery Board/Nail file
- Moisturiser/Urea based emollient
- Small hand-held mirror



General Foot Care and Hygiene

1. Wash your feet every day using warm, soapy water and take care to dry your feet well, especially between your toes - this will help to prevent fungal infections, such as athlete's foot.
2. If the skin on your feet is dry, put moisturiser on regularly before you go to bed, avoiding between the toes (this can lead to fungal infections).
3. Check your feet daily. Giving your feet the once over will help you to spot any possible problems quickly.
4. Wear well-fitting socks and change them every day to maintain good hygiene.
5. Ensure you are always wearing well fitting shoes



Nail Care

If you do not feel that you can cut your own toenails safely, you might find it easier to file the nails weekly instead, this will help maintain a more suitable length.

Nail problems and injuries are caused most often when the nails are too long or are not cut correctly or regularly enough.

Please refer to the nail care information sheet for an explanation on how to cut and file your nails.

Callus and Corns

Hard skin forms to protect our feet from stress and strain. If you have this on your feet and it causes you no pain, do not worry about it as it is doing its job. If you do experience pain or discomfort, use a foot file to thin down the callus, being careful not to overdo it – you should not aim to remove it all.

You should do this on a regular basis, ideally 3-4 days a week to prevent it building up.

To help reduce your hard skin you can also apply an emollient/cream daily that contains Urea (10-25%).



Footwear

Poorly fitting footwear can cause a lot of common problems seen on the feet. This diagram shows the key characteristics for a good shoe.

Slip-on shoes and slippers should be avoided when walking for long distances as they do not provide your feet with adequate support.

