



# *presents* **WOUND** Education Series

## **Diabetes And Wound Care**

People with diabetes face an elevated risk of developing wounds and complications due to various factors linked to the conditions. The primary reasons for this heightened risk include peripheral neuropathy, poor circulation, compromised immune function, elevated blood sugar levels, delayed wound healing, and susceptibility to foot ulcers and deformities.

It is crucial for individuals with diabetes to take a proactive stance in implementing preventative measures and promptly addressing even the slightest wounds or pressure points. The proactive approach can significantly reduce the risk of infections, promote healing, and prevent more severe complications such as amputations. If you observe any new or changes in the appearance or sensation of a wound or pressure area, it is important to promptly inform the team at Blue Ridge Wound Care.

### **Key components of diabetic wound care include:**

**Daily Foot Inspection:** Regularly check the feet for cuts, blisters, redness, swelling, or signs of infection. Use a mirror or seek assistance if visibility is challenging.

**Wash And Dry Feet:** Clean the feet daily with mild soap and lukewarm water. Gently pat the feet dry, paying attention to spaces between the toes.

**Moisturize:** Apply moisturizer to prevent dry skin, avoiding application between toes to prevent fungal infections.

**Trim Nails Carefully:** Trim toenails straight across and file edges to prevent ingrown toenails. Seek professional help if necessary.

**Wear Proper Footwear:** Choose comfortable, well-fitting shoes to prevent rubbing and pressure points. Inspect shoes for foreign objects and avoid going barefoot.

**Inspect Inside Shoes:** Check for rough seams, sharp objects, or irritants that could cause wounds.

**Manage Blood Sugar Levels:** Keep blood glucose levels within the target range to avoid impairing wound healing. Follow the prescribed diabetes management plan.

**Avoid Smoking:** Quit smoking to improve overall health, as smoking can reduce blood flow, impair healing, and increase the risk of complications.

**Exercise Regularly:** Engage in regular physical activity to enhance circulation and overall health.

**Foot Elevation:** Elevate the feet when sitting to reduce swelling.

**Prompt Wound Care:** Clean wounds with mild soap and water, applying an antiseptic ointment if recommended. Cover the wound with a sterile dressing.

**Regular Medical Check-ups:** Schedule regular check-ups, including with podiatrists, to monitor foot health. Blue Ridge Wound Care is available for recommended foot checks every six months or as needed.

**Peripheral Neuropathy Monitoring:** Regularly check for signs of peripheral neuropathy, such as tingling or numbness, and report changes to healthcare providers.

**Foot Debridement And Care:** Seek professional help for debridement if necessary, following healthcare provider's instruction.

**Prompt Medical Attention:** Seek immediate medical attention for signs of infection, worsening wounds, or changes in foot sensation.

Diabetic wound care necessitates a collaborative approach involving individuals with diabetes, healthcare providers, and specialists when required. Early detection, preventative measures, and proactive management are crucial in minimizing the risk of complications associated with diabetic wounds.

## Diabetic Wound Healing Timeline

Diabetes introduces numerous risk factors that significantly impede the healing of wounds. The duration required for a diabetic wound to heal varies widely, contingent on factors such as the nature and severity of the wound, the presence of underlying health conditions, overall health status, and the efficacy of wound care. Notably, diabetic wounds, particularly foot ulcers, exhibit a slower healing pace compared to wounds in individuals without diabetes.

Generally, the time frame for healing a diabetic wound can span from a few weeks to several months, influenced by several factors:

**Wound Depth And Size:** Larger or deeper wounds may necessitate an extended healing period.

**Infection:** Wounds with infections may demand additional time for healing, particularly if antibiotic treatment becomes essential.

**Vascular Health:** Diminished blood circulation, prevalent in individuals with diabetes, can impede the healing process.

**Neuropathy:** Nerve damage (neuropathy) can compromise sensation in the affected area, contributing to delayed wound healing.

**Blood Sugar Control:** Maintaining optimal blood glucose levels is pivotal for fostering wound healing. Poorly managed diabetes can hinder the healing process.

**Patient Compliance:** Adhering to prescribed wound care, medications, and lifestyle adjustments significantly influences the healing trajectory.

It is imperative for individuals with diabetes to collaborate closely with the healthcare professionals at Blue Ridge Wound Care to monitor and address their wounds. Regular assessments, appropriate wound care, implementation of offloading techniques, and addressing underlying health issues are pivotal components in promoting healing and averting potential complications.