

# Diabetes and Loss of Protective Sensation

## Information for patients and families

### What are signs of nerve damage?

- Not being able to feel pain
- Numbness (lack of feeling)
- Tingling

### Why are nerves important?

Nerves in your feet carry signals to your brain. Your brain reads these signals and tells the body to react (for example if something is sharp, hot or cold).

### What happens with Loss of Protective Sensation?

This condition begins in your toes and can move slowly up your feet and legs.

You can develop numbness or tingling. This may decrease feeling in your feet and hide pain.

Without pain, you may not notice a cut – and cuts may become infected.

You may not notice if you have broken a bone. Broken bones may heal poorly and lead to a foot with an unusual shape.

### What should I do?

#### 1) Check your feet every day and look for changes

Check the top and bottom of your feet, your heels, and between your toes. You can use a mirror or ask someone for help.

Call your health care professional if you notice:

- a wound
- ingrown toe nail
- increased heat, swelling, and redness

**2) You may need to visit a health care professional for routine nail and callus trimming**

**3) Wear proper shoes**

- Always wear socks and shoes, even indoors.
- After buying shoes, bring them to your health care professional to check the fit.
- Each time you put on your shoes, feel inside with your hands to make sure nothing inside.
- Take new shoes off every hour to check for red areas on your feet.