



INDIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION (HQS.)

(Registered under the Societies Act XXI of 1860)

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Press Release

Proper diabetes care essential to keep diabetic foot at bay

Even a small injury can lead to complications and it is imperative to get feet checked annually in those with diabetes

New Delhi, 21st July 2017: According to statistics, during the diagnosis of Type 2 diabetes, at least 1 in 10 people, possess risk factors for foot damage. Studies also estimate the prevalence of diabetic foot in India between 7.4% and 15.3%. It is important to identify this condition at the earliest and provide treatment failing which the condition can lead to serious health issues. A small injury can later develop infections and even end up in amputations.

The WHO defines diabetic foot as, "The foot of a diabetes patient that has potential risk of pathologic consequences including infection, ulceration and /or destruction of deep tissues associated with neurologic abnormalities, various degrees of peripheral vascular disease and/or metabolic complications of diabetes in the lower limb."

Speaking about this condition, **Padma Shri Awardee Dr K K Aggarwal, National President Indian Medical Association (IMA) and President Heart Care Foundation of India (HCFI) and Dr RN Tandon – Honorary Secretary General IMA in a joint statement**, said "It is imperative to check the feet every day once diabetes has been diagnosed. Factors such as callus, corn, infections of skin or nailbed, onychocryptosis or ingrown toe-nail can lead to ulcers and must be prevented. Diabetes leads to damage of nerves in the feet. In the absence of pain, such small injuries can go unnoticed. Additionally, other associated conditions such as high blood pressure, smoking, cholesterol, and obesity tend to reduce the blood flow to the feet, in a person with diabetes. All these predispose a person to secondary infections thereby aggravating the problem further. Some other complications associated with diabetic foot include ulceration, infection, septicaemia, gangrene, deformity, and limb loss."

Some probable causes of a diabetic foot include peripheral neuropathy (nerve damage), vasculopathy, (obstruction of blood vessels), foot deformity, infection, and oedema (swollen feet). Treating a diabetic foot includes addressing three basic issues: debridement, offloading, and infection control.

Adding further, **Dr Aggarwal**, said, "Those with diabetes should get their feet examined on an annual basis. It is important to notify the doctor if there are any cuts or breaks in the skin, or an ingrown nail, or if the feet become less sensitive or start hurting. It is possible to prevent development of diabetic foot by optimizing glycaemic control, offering patient education including daily feet examination, nail care, proper foot wear, and utilizing emollients to moisturize the feet."

Follow these tips to take care of your feet if you have been diagnosed with diabetes:

- Keep sugar levels under check: Follow lifestyle tips suggested by your doctor to keep your blood glucose levels in the correct range.
- Check your feet every day: Watch out for any red spots, cuts, swelling, or blisters.
- Be physically active: Engage in at least 30 minutes of physical activity every day.
- Keep your feet clean: Wash your feet every day and dry them carefully, especially the area between toes.
- Moisturize feet well: Apply a thin coat of moisturizer over the top and bottom of your feet every day after you wash them.
- Trim your nails regularly.
- Wear comfortable shoes and socks: It is a good idea to not walk barefoot. Buy footwear that is comfortable and fit well. Ensure that the lining is smooth and there are no objects inside your footwear.
- Keep the blood flowing to your feet: Put your feet up when sitting. Wiggle your toes and move your ankles up and down for 5 minutes, two (2) or three (3) times a day. Don't cross your legs for long periods of time.

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About IMA: Indian Medical Association is the only representative, national voluntary organization of Doctors of Modern Scientific System of Medicine, which looks after the interest of doctors as well as the well being of the community at large. It has its Headquarter in Delhi and State / Terr. Branches in 30 States and Union Territories. It has over 2, 60,000 doctors as its members through more than 1765 active local branches spread across the country.

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