Happy Feet!

Have you ever stopped to think about all your feet do for you each day? If your feet are functioning well, then the odds are you’ve not given it much thought. But if things go wrong, suddenly you realize your feet are your foundation and help keep you active and moving.

If you have diabetes, over time, high blood sugar affects nerves and blood vessels, including those that supply the feet. This means you may lose feeling in your feet, increasing risk of an infection if you get a cut or wound that goes unnoticed. Wounds may heal more slowly and be at higher risk of infection. Well-controlled blood sugar is the first line of defense against foot ailments. Here are some tips for keeping your feet happy.

Check Your Feet Daily

Daily self-checks are especially important if you have loss of sensation, tingling, burning, stabbing pains (neuropathy), or peripheral artery disease. They are also advised if you have any changes in the shape of your feet, or have had a foot ulcer in the past. Do a daily check so that you will notice changes right away. When you take off your shoes and socks at night is one good time to check. Figure out a convenient time to fit this into your life.

Call your healthcare provider right away if you have:

• A cut, blister, or bruise on your foot that does not start to heal after a day (it’s startling how fast a small cut can become an infected ulcer)

• Skin on your foot that becomes red, warm, or painful—signs of a possible infection

• A callus with dried blood inside of it, which often can be the first sign of a wound under the callus

• A foot infection that becomes black and smelly—signs of gangrene

If you can’t reach your feet or it’s hard to see them, try a self-standing magnifying mirror that you put on the floor, or get help from a significant other.

Have Your Doctor Check Your Feet at Each Visit

Once a year, your provider should do a thorough diabetes foot exam. And with high risk feet, it’s smart care for their eyes to be on your feet at every visit.

Footwear Matters

Many foot problems are caused by ill-fitting footwear. Look for shoes that provide stability and comfort, and are roomy enough to avoid pressure at any point on your foot. Follow these tips to get the best footwear:

• For the best fit, buy new shoes at the end of the day when your feet are the largest. Make sure there’s enough room for your toes.

• If you have bunions or hammer toes, buy shoes with extra-wide and/or deep toe boxes, and get help from knowledgeable clerks.

• Ask your provider if you’re eligible for diabetes shoes and inserts. All kinds of styles are available; diabetes shoes are more fashionable than they used to be!

Taking the time to find the right footwear will make a world of difference for the health of your feet.

Putting Your Best Feet Forward

Keeping your blood sugar levels well controlled reduces the risk of losing sensation in your feet. If you’re looking for support to reach and maintain well controlled blood sugar levels, we’re here to help! Contact us at yoursupport@ pacificsource.com or (888) 987-5805 to learn more about our health coaches and the Diabetes Support Program.

Learn More

Preventing Foot Problems: NIDDK.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes/overview/preventing-problems/foot-problems

“Take Care of Your Feet for a Lifetime” booklet: NIDDK.nih.gov/-/media/Files/Diabetes/NDEP-4_508.pdf
Meet Your Team

We’re a group of four clinicians that work with members like you through the PacificSource Condition Support program. We’re here for you to provide support and information to help you take charge of your health to feel your best. Together we represent a wide variety of expertise, including counseling, nursing, nutrition, and diabetes education. We share a passion for supporting others toward their best health.

The Condition Support program offers you the opportunity to talk with one of our clinical team members on a regular, ongoing basis for health and wellness coaching related to your condition.

Here’s what you can expect throughout the three-month program:

• Learn what you can do to take care of your health.
• Discover what makes you successful.
• Receive guidance to set goals that are meaningful to you, and support to stay on track.
• Receive information about medication, health, nutrition, and fitness.

Christina Lee, RN

Although I have a gratifying background as a mental health nurse, last year it became clear to me that I needed a change. I became a health coach because I believe people make healthy changes with positive and focused support. One aspect of this job that I enjoy is creating opportunities for people to explore the link between mental and physical health. This link is especially clear in the area that interests me most: helping people effectively manage chronic pain.

Debby Coulthard, RN CDE (Certified Diabetes Educator)

I recently joined PacificSource and am loving helping members with their wellness, preventive care, and health maintenance goals. My focus is diabetes in adults and children. My goal is to support you with your goals—to listen to you, learn from you, and offer my expertise. I look forward to partnering with you!

Laura Dudley, RDN

As a dietitian and trained health coach, my role is not only to provide you with information you want, but to help you apply that information in a meaningful way. My passion is to help others work toward their healthiest body so they can enjoy life. If you’re interested in making healthy changes to lose weight and improve your health, reach out to us to learn more about Think-Nourish-Move, a one-on-one support program.

Tricia Gardner, RN LCSW

Finding your pathways to self-care and discovering your steps to improved health are what enriches my work as a health coach. I’ve been a registered nurse and licensed clinical social worker within inpatient and home-care health settings over the past 30 years. This experience flavors the conversations we share, but your planning and decisions provide the direction for coaching. I hope that we have the opportunity to talk!
Member Success Story: “Living Proof” You Can Make a Comeback

While working two physically demanding and nearly full-time jobs, Bob’s life completely changed. He had a stroke that left him with right-sided weakness, making it extremely difficult to walk and control his right arm and hand. It also affected his short-term memory.

Bob says that as he recovered from the stroke, “I realized I wanted to be alive,” and he began to make choices toward health improvement. One of those initial choices was to “stay off” cigarettes. He participated in the Quit For Life® program, successfully quitting and remaining smoke free.

How Our Program Helped

Another setback came when Bob found out that he has type 2 diabetes. He decided to participate in PacificSource’s Condition Support coaching as a “positive force, a sounding board” and for “honest feedback and support.” Through the program, he learned ways to manage his eating, medications, and monitoring. Bob says that the information he has learned has been critical, but that the coaching conversations themselves have been “the most help in coming back.”

Bob has navigated “finding the right medication, staying on the medication, sugar replacement, and salt reduction.” He says, “I love to eat, and I experimented with myself.” He attended diabetic education classes, met with a dietitian individually, and now creates diabetic recipes he shares with his family.

Bob has lost more than 40 pounds since his stoke, his A1C is now 5.2, and his blood glucose checks were reduced to three times a week. In addition, Bob has achieved a 40% recovery of body function and is tutoring a student in band. Bob says that a major health event “may seem like a death sentence and there is no coming back from it, but I am living proof that you can. It hasn’t been work so much as a lifestyle change.”
Egg Roll Bowl

Ingredients
- 3 Tbsp. low-sodium soy sauce
- 1½ tsp. sugar
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 tsp. seasoned rice wine vinegar
- ½ tsp. toasted sesame oil
- ½ tsp. freshly grated ginger root
- 1 lb. ground turkey (7% or lower in fat)
- ½ tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 1 Tbsp. canola oil
- 7–8 cups shredded cabbage (about one 16-ounce package)
- 2 cups shredded carrots
- 2½ cups cooked brown rice
- 4–6 scallions, thinly sliced

Directions
1. In a small bowl, make the sauce by combing the soy sauce, sugar, garlic, vinegar, sesame oil, and ginger.
2. Brown and crumble the ground turkey over medium-high heat. Drain fat and remove from skillet.
3. Add the canola oil to skillet, heating over medium-high heat. Add carrots and stir-fry until crisp tender (about 3 minutes). Add the cabbage and stir-fry until it starts to wilt (about 3–4 minutes).
4. Add the browned meat and the sauce to the cabbage and carrots. Stir constantly and cook until most liquid is absorbed.
5. Serve a 1-cup portion of the meat and veggie mix over ½ cup cooked brown rice and garnish with sliced scallions.

Nutrition Facts per Serving (one cup)

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