

UNDERSTANDING DIABETIC FOOT ULCER (DFU)

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WHAT IS A DFU?

Wounds to the foot are a consequence of uncontrolled Diabetes or a side effect of the Diabetes disease.

They are caused by nerve damage, which reduces sensation in the feet, which can lead to small cuts/ skin breaks unknown to the person. Then, vascular compromise caused by Diabetes will lead to reduced healing and prolonged chronic wounds with high risk for reoccurrence.



HOW TO PREVENT?

- Patients should be aware of the risks that Diabetes bring to developing foot ulceration.
- They should be educated to understand how Diabetes can affect sensation, what neuropathy is (it affects various organs), and how to prevent skin damage.

HOW TO MANAGE?

- Glycaemia control is key to support wound healing and prevent reoccurrence;
 - Having appropriate shoe wear;
 - Offloading techniques/ products will be essential;
 - Checking their feet on a daily basis;
 - Skin care on a daily basis;
 - Maintain visits to podiatry or other healthcare professionals, according to their risk level, but a minimum of once a year checks.
 - Prevent and manage infection, even if localised to the wound, as patients with Diabetes are at higher risk of this wound complication.
- The infection can spread quickly and even become life threatening at times.



A multidisciplinary team approach is required to manage DFU and can lead to better outcomes.

Self care is also paramount as patients must prevent future wounds with daily assessment and care.