

## FOOT CARE PROGRAM:

**Assessment, treatment and prevention of foot conditions** such as ingrown and fungal toenails, corns, calluses, warts, foot ulcers and infections, and preventative foot care services for people who are at high risk for developing foot disease and/or are not able to safely perform their own foot care.

## WHO IS THIS PROGRAM FOR?

People who are **unable to access foot care services through private coverage, benefits or other funded services.** (\*\*We will not be able to offer our services to you if you have private coverage \*\*)

People with **diabetes**, peripheral neuropathy, peripheral arterial disease, Charcot foot, ulcerations, or amputations.

People with a **debilitating foot condition**, progressive neuromuscular condition, rheumatoid arthritis, foot infection, or wart.

People with **visual/physical/cognitive impairments** that prohibit the patient's ability to reach or see their feet to perform safe footcare.

## HOW TO ACCESS:

You must meet the above **criteria** to attend our program.

A Physician, Nurse Practitioner or NFHT Clinician must **refer** a patient to the program.

## OUR TEAM:

Brooke Mitchell – Chiroprapist      Amber Marlow – Foot Care Nurse

## APPOINTMENTS:

Patients in the foot care program are typically seen every **3 months** unless conditions of feet require them to be seen sooner. You may have to seek outside services with private foot care facilities between appointments if you feel you need additional care beyond what we are able to offer.

Please **arrive to appointments at least 5 minutes before** scheduled appointment time.

Please try to **give at least 24 hours notice** if you need to cancel your appointment.

## WHAT WE OFFER:

- Assessment of the feet
- Treatment for current foot concerns as well as preventative measures
- Toenail trimming and filing
- Treatment of corns and calluses and warts
- Wound assessment
- Treatment for involuted and ingrown nails
- Reduction of thickened and/or fungal nails
- Diabetes sensation testing
- Education

Foot Care at the Northumberland Family Health Team does **NOT** include the following services:

- Foot bath/soak - Because it is performed on dry feet there is no risk of infection arising as from a shared foot bath
- Pedicures
- Foot massage
- Nail polish application or removal
- We do not do orthotics or address biomechanical concerns unless otherwise indicated.
- Finger nails will not be trimmed

## STEPS FOR HEALTHY FEET:

- Control your blood glucose levels if you have diabetes.
- If you smoke, quit or decrease frequency. Ask about our smoking cessation program.
- Exercise daily as directed by your healthcare professional.
- Inspect your feet regularly to make sure there are no cuts, cracks, ingrown toenails, blisters, etc. Use a hand mirror to see the bottom of your feet, or ask someone else to check them for you.
- Look for signs of redness or blisters on your feet. This shows your shoe may not fit properly.
- Wash your feet daily in warm (not hot) water, using a mild soap. Make sure to be drying thoroughly, especially between your toes.
- Apply a moisturizer to your feet but **NOT** between your toes. If you have very dry skin or calluses a cream with Urea is recommended.
- Trim toenails straight across, but not too short. Be careful not to cut nails in corners or on the sides; this can lead to ingrown toenails. Persons with diabetes, poor circulation, or heart problems should not treat their own feet, because they are more prone to infection.

## Footwear:

- Shake out your shoes before you put them on.
- Wear shoes at all times, indoors and out. Avoid walking barefooted. Your feet will be more prone to injury and infection. At the beach or when wearing sandals always use sunblock on your feet.
- Buy shoes with closed toes as they protect your feet from injury.
- Change your socks every day. Whenever possible, wear white socks – if you have a cut or sore, the drainage will be easy to see.
- Make sure that your shoes fit properly. Purchase new shoes later in the day when feet tend to be at their largest, and replace worn out shoes as soon as possible. Have your shoes professionally fitted.

## COMMON CONDITIONS:

**Nail fungus:** A common condition that begins as a white or yellow spot under the tip of your toenail. As the fungal infection goes deeper, nail fungus may cause your nail to discolor, thicken and crumble at the edge. Nail fungus is contagious.

**Ulcer:** An open sore on the sole of the foot or on toe joints. It can result from poor foot care. Untreated ulcerations may lead to gangrene or amputation.

**Corn:** A conical-shaped area of thickened skin. It results from continued pressure and friction on the foot. Proper footwear lessens the frequency of corn formation.

**Callus:** A thickened and hardened part of the skin or soft tissue, especially in an area that has been subjected to pressure/friction.

**Bunion:** A bony growth, usually found at the base of the big toe. It is caused by ill-fitting footwear and/or genetic predisposition. Bothersome bunions may be surgically removed or treated with special footwear.

**Ingrown Toenail:** A common condition in which the corner or side of a toenail grows into the soft flesh. The result is pain, redness, swelling and, sometimes, an infection. Ingrown toenails usually affect your big toe.

**Blister:** A circular pocket of skin filled with serum or blood. It is caused by friction between skin and footwear. It can be prevented by wearing socks and well-fitting shoes.

**Warts:** A growth that usually appears on the heels or other weight-bearing areas of your feet such as the base of your toes or forefoot. Plantar warts are caused by a virus and are contagious.

**Athlete's Foot:** (tinea pedis) is a fungal infection that usually begins between the toes. It occurs most commonly in people whose feet have become very sweaty while confined within tight-fitting shoes.