

When should diabetics come in for a foot check?

This is a question we get asked frequently. At minimum, diabetics should come in to get their feet checked once a year. If you have any complications from your diabetes such as neuropathy or poor circulation, you may need to come in more frequently. I like to get x-rays of both feet at least every couple years on patients with diabetes so we can check for changes in the bones.

There is a condition called Charcot that diabetics can develop. Thankfully, the majority of people with diabetes do not develop Charcot. Having an x-ray to compare to from before this condition develops, makes the diagnosis much clearer.

Charcot is a condition that affects the bones, joints, and soft tissue in the foot and ankle. The bones start to breakdown, and essentially multiple fractures are present. The area of the foot affected becomes red, swollen, and warm. The area of the foot I see it most commonly, is in the middle of the foot, but it can happen anywhere in the foot or ankle.

As those bones start to heal, if they are not stabilized properly, the foot can become deformed. This makes getting shoes on difficult. It can also result in a "rocker-bottom" foot. This is problematic because a pressure point then develops in the bottom of the foot leading to open wounds.

If you are diabetic, if you notice any changes in your feet such as redness, swelling, bruising, or pain, come in and have them evaluated. The earlier we can diagnose issues, the more likely we are to avoid serious outcomes.