



Fall/Winter 2016

Diabetes

Have diabetes? Check your feet daily

If you have diabetes, you know you have to check your blood sugar. Did you also know you should check your feet every day too? That's because you can develop sores or wounds, called foot ulcers.

Looking at your feet may be the only way to know you have an ulcer. That's because you may have lost

feeling in your feet. Many people with diabetes do. So a developing wound won't always cause pain. However, it may become red and swollen and show other signs of infection.

An untreated foot ulcer may not heal properly. And an infected wound can become serious quickly. Some problems can even lead to

amputations. You don't want that to happen to you.

If you discover a wound, see a doctor right away. Fast treatment means fewer problems. And you'll heal faster too.

Source: American Diabetes Association (www.diabetes.org)

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This is general health information and should not replace the advice or care you get from your provider. Always ask your provider about your own health care needs. If you would no longer like to receive this mailing, please contact the Care Management Department.

Contact us

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Member Services: **1-800-279-1878**
(TTY **7-1-1** or **1-800-828-1120**)

Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

www.aetnabetterhealth.com/virginia

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Find kidney disease early

If you have diabetes, you should be checked for kidney disease at least once a year. Finding kidney damage early means it can be treated and slowed.

Screenings for kidney disease include:

- A test that measures the amount of creatinine (a waste product) in the blood. The result is used to find your glomerular filtration rate (GFR). That's how much blood your kidneys filter per minute. Your GFR helps show whether you have kidney disease.
- A urine test that looks for a type of protein called albumin, which can leak into the urine from damaged kidneys. The amount is compared with the creatinine level in your urine (creatinine appears in both blood and urine) to help determine if you have kidney disease.

Sources: *American Diabetes Association* (www.diabetes.org); *National Institutes of Health* (www.nih.gov)



Need help? Your care manager can tell you more about diabetes and help you connect with your provider. Call Member Services and ask for the Care Management Department.

Do the holidays stress you out?

Winter can be a difficult time of year. The weather changes and the holidays are upon us. Having a chronic condition can add to these challenges. Sometimes that causes depression and anxiety. That, in turn, can make your condition worse. It can also hurt family and friend relationships and other areas of your life.

If you feel down or out-of-sorts for a couple weeks or

more, tell your doctor. A simple, online questionnaire can help start that discussion. Go to **www.adaa.org** and click on “Live and Thrive.” On the “Ask and Learn” page, you’ll find a link to a depression screening tool. After you answer the questions, print the results and share them with your doctor.

Source: *Anxiety and Depression Association of America* (www.adaa.org)

Flu season is here: Have you gotten your shot?

Your best bet for avoiding the flu? Get a shot every year.

That’s true for just about everyone. And if you have a chronic condition, it’s even more important. Try to get the shot as soon as you can in the fall.

Source: *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention* (www.cdc.gov)