



NL Health Services

Cardiovascular
and Stroke Care

FACT SHEET

Better Sugar Control, Better Circulation

Why Diabetes Affects Circulation

High blood sugar (glucose) over time can damage your blood vessels and nerves, increasing the risk of serious complications.

Diabetes can:

- Cause inflammation and plaque build-up in arteries
- Make blood vessels narrow and stiff
- Reduce blood flow to the legs and feet
- Increase the risk of blood clots

Diabetes may also cause damage to nerves, if not properly controlled, making it harder to feel pain. This means injuries or infections can go unnoticed and become severe.

Why Blood Sugar Control Matters

Keeping your blood sugar in target range helps protect your circulation and overall health.

Benefits of good control:

- Slows the damage of blood vessels
- Reduces risk of ulcerations and infections
- Improves healing
- Lowers risk of amputation and hospitalization

Small, consistent changes can make a big difference!

Taking Medications Safely

- Take medications exactly as prescribed
- Do not skip doses, even if you feel unwell
- Know the signs of low blood sugar:
 - Shaking
 - Sweating
 - Dizziness



Our Network for Heart, Stroke and Vascular Care.



Daily Foot Care (Essential with Diabetes)

Poor circulation combined with reduced sensation increases the risk of serious infections and ulcerations.

Daily Care:

- Check your feet for cuts, redness, or sores
- Wash and dry feet thoroughly
- If you have a sore, do **NOT** soak your feet or apply creams

Protect Your Feet:

- Wear well-fitting shoes
- Never walk barefoot
- Trim nails carefully

Blood Sugar Targets

Before meals: 4-7mmol/L

After meals: 5-10mmol/L

Staying on target helps reduce long-term damage. Check as directed and keep a record of your trends

*Your healthcare provider may give you personalized targets

Poor circulation + reduced sensation = higher risk for serious infection and ulcerations

Healthy Eating

Focus on:

- Balanced meals (protein, whole grains, vegetables)
- High-fibre foods
- Water instead of sugary drinks

Limit:

- Large portion sizes
- Highly processed foods
- Sugary foods and drinks

When to Seek Medical Attention

Contact your provider if you notice:

- Wounds that heal slowly
- Numbness or tingling in your feet
- Changes in skin colour or temperature
- Redness, swelling, or signs of infection
- New pain in the legs or feet

