



# NL Health Services

Cardiovascular  
and Stroke Care

## FACT SHEET

# Protecting Your Feet and Mobility

## What is Neuropathy?

Neuropathy refers to damage to the nerves that affects sensation, movement, and pain. Diabetes is one of the most common causes.

When combined with peripheral vascular disease (PVD), neuropathy significantly increases the risk of serious complications.

## How Neuropathy Affects Your Body?

Neuropathy can reduce your ability to feel pain, temperature, or injury.

Common effects include:

- Numbness or reduced sensation
- Tingling or “pins and needles”
- Burning, stabbing, or sharp pain
- Muscle weakness or loss of balance
- Increased sensitivity to touch

Because of reduced sensation, injuries may go unnoticed and worsen over time.

## Why Neuropathy + PVD is Serious

The combination of nerve damage and poor circulation can lead to:

- Injuries that are not felt or noticed
- Slower healing due to reduced blood flow to the area
- Increased risk of infections and ulcerations
- Higher risk of severe complications, including amputation





## Protecting Your Feet and Mobility

### Preventing Injury and Infection

- Always wear shoes (even indoors)
- Avoid extreme temperature (hot water, heating pads)
- Check inside your shoe before wearing them
- Treat cuts or blisters right away with iodine
- Keep feet clean and dry

**Prevention is key; small injuries can quickly become serious!**

Protecting your feet is essential when living with neuropathy and PVD.

**Reduced feeling + poor circulation = higher risk; but daily care can prevent serious outcomes**

## Importance of Foot Care

Daily foot care is essential to prevent complications.

- Check your feet daily (cuts, blisters, redness/discolouration, swelling)
- Wash with warm water and dry thoroughly
- Trim toenails straight across (not too short)
- Wear clean, well-fitting shoes and socks

### Managing Pain and Symptoms

Managing neuropathy may take time but it can be improved with:

- Prescription medications
- Regular physical activity
- Good blood sugar control (if diabetic)
- Avoiding smoking and alcohol
- Guidance from your healthcare provider

### When to Seek Medical Help

Contact your healthcare provider if your notice:

- New numbness, tingling, or pain
- Cuts, blisters, or sores that do not heal
- Signs of infection (redness, swelling, heat, drainage)
- Changes in skin colour or temperature
- Difficulty walking or balance issues

