THE ROLE OF THE FOOT NURSE

Prevention

- promote the maintenance of healthy feet

Advocate

- promote foot health and mobility
- promote community resources
- promote family involvement

Treatment

Nursing foot care includes:

- a nursing health assessment including an assessment of the foot and lower extremities
- nail cutting & filing
- management and care of corns, calluses and ingrown toe nails
- working with clients to put together a plan that is focused on preventative measures to promote self care
- ongoing nursing assessment and evaluation
- identifying the need for more specialized treatments and referring to the appropriate resources (ie: Podiatrist, Pedorthist)

Education

- providing clients and caregivers with information specific to foot care, changes to the foot, footwear, the importance of exercise and proper nutrition
- providing appropriate educational handouts

TIPS FOR HEALTHY FEET

Do wear proper fitting shoes that are supportive.

Do walk. It's a great way to increase circulation, prevent blood clots and keep your bones and muscles healthy.

Do buy shoes in the late afternoon because your feet may swell during the day.

Do wash and dry your feet well, especially between the toes.

Do check your feet daily for cuts, bruises and blisters.

Don't wear tight socks, elastics or knee-high stockings that restrict circulation.

Don't go barefoot, even indoors.

Don't put hot water bottles or heating pads on your feet.

Don't cross your legs.

Don't smoke because smoking decreases circulation and healing, and significantly increases the risk of amputation.

Don't ignore foot pain.

Don't use over-the-counter medications to treat corns, calluses and warts.

Don't treat your own ingrown toe nails, calluses or corns with scissors or a razor.

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INGROWN TOENAILS

Nursing foot care keeps you active and on your feet

Manitoba Association of Foot Care Nurses

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Find a Foot Care Nurse in your area **www.mafcn.ca**

HEALTHY FEET ARE AN IMPORTANT PART OF OVERALL GOOD HEALTH

Why is foot care important?

Although most people are born with healthy feet, as we grow older, three out of four Canadians will develop a foot problem that requires medical attention.

- regular foot care plays an important role in keeping you healthy and remaining active
- feet that are healthy and pain free help you to keep your balance, which may prevent falls
- foot related problems may result in a loss of independence and well-being

A percentage of nursing foot care services may be covered by some health insurance plans including extended Blue Cross, Great West Life, Sunlife, and DVA.
Receipts are issued and may be applied to the medical expense portion of your personal income tax.

Ingrown toenails

The nail becomes ingrown when the side of the toenail turns downward and presses into the skin or when the nail grows into the skin. Ingrown toenails can be very painful and limit activities of daily living. Once the skin is punctured, the area can become infected or inflamed. Any toe can be affected but it is usually the big toe.

Symptoms

- Redness, swelling, and pain
- If infected, there may be some fluid (pus) oozing from around the nail
- The toe may become more painful and there may be an overgrowth of skin at the nail's edge

Cause

- An ingrown toenail is usually caused by a sharp spike of nail growing into the skin
- Improper nail cutting
- Wearing poorly fitting shoes (tight shoes, high heels, pointy toe shoes) or tight socks
- Toenails that curl inward along the side
- Congenital deformity

Prevention/What Can You Do?

- Cut toenails straight across following the natural line of the nail up to the nail edge
- DO NOT cut down the side of the nail
- Wear proper fitting shoes
- If painful or infected, seek medical attention immediately

Do you have diabetes, circulation problems, numbness in your feet? Do you have difficulty seeing or reaching your feet? If you answer YES to any one of these, you are encouraged to seek assistance in foot care rather than attempting to do it yourself.

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