

Chronic Complications from Diabetes

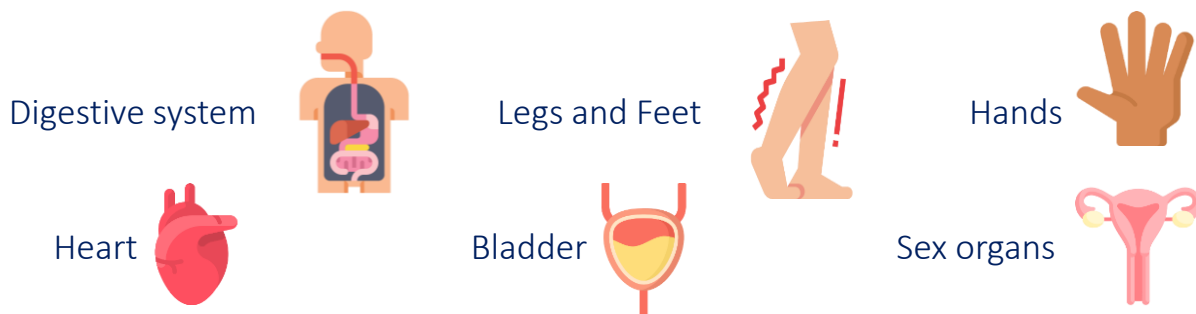
Neuropathy, Skin Ulcers, and Kidney Disease

You may have some chronic health problems from your diabetes. These are problems that develop over time and are long-lasting. High blood glucose levels cause damage to your blood vessels, nerves, and organs and cause these problems. You can prevent or delay these problems by managing your diabetes. This fact sheet will discuss:

- Neuropathy
- Skin Ulcers (sores)
- Kidney Disease

About Neuropathy

Neuropathy is damage to your nerves from high blood glucose over time. It affects about 50% of people with diabetes! **It can affect:**



Signs of neuropathy:

- Tingling or sharp pain
- Increased sensitivity
- Numbness

How to prevent neuropathy:

Keep your blood glucose in the target range set by your doctor.

About Skin Ulcers

Ulcers are open sores that most commonly affect your legs and feet. If you have ulcers, you should get treatment right away. If you do not get treatment, ulcers become wounds that will not heal. Early treatment can prevent hospital stays and amputations.

Signs of skin ulcers:

- Numbness or pain
- Lumpy skin
- Blackened skin
- Smelly discharge
- A stain on sock or other clothing

How to prevent skin ulcers:

- Check your feet daily and in between toes every day
- Wash and dry feet well
- Trim toenails straight across
- Do not go barefoot
- Exercise as your doctor told you to
- Wear shoes that fit properly
- Have your doctor check your feet



Treatment:

You may not notice skin ulcers right away. It's important to look for the signs and symptoms above and treat foot issues early before they progress into more serious issues that can even lead to hospitalization. When ulcers are unable to heal and become severe, amputation may be required. Take care of your feet!

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About Kidney Disease

If high blood glucose damages the blood vessels in your kidneys, they cannot filter out waste that needs to leave the body. This causes kidney disease.

If you get kidney disease, your treatment will depend on the health of your kidneys. At first, treatment may be a low protein, low salt (or sodium) diet. If it gets worse, you may have to take medicine. If your kidneys quit working, you may need dialysis or even a kidney transplant.

These things can make you more likely to develop kidney disease:

- High blood pressure
- Family history of kidney disease
- Poor blood glucose control that is chronic (lasts a long time)

Signs of kidney disease:

- Fluid buildup in the body (looks like swelling)
- Feeling weak
- Less appetite
- Poor sleep
- Trouble thinking

How do I prevent kidney disease?

You can do 2 things to prevent kidney disease: 1. Keep your blood *glucose* at healthy levels. 2. Keep your blood *pressure* at healthy levels. **To control your blood *pressure*, you should:**



Cut down on salt intake



Avoid tobacco and alcohol



Manage your stress



Lose weight



Exercise