The Problem
Diabetes can contribute to the lack of sensation to the foot along with decreased blood flow. This can cause an increase in infections and ulcerations of the foot. An ulceration is an opening in the skin that may lead to infection, gangrene and amputation. Neuropathy may also lead to a burning pain in the feet especially at night.

Prevention
Prevention of diabetic foot problems is the key! This includes daily foot inspection and calling your podiatrist whenever something seems wrong, even little things. Proper selection of shoe gear and insoles is important. Application of moisturizing lotion is important.

“A keen awareness of small changes to your foot might be the difference that prevents an ulcer or infection. When in doubt, call Dr. Wilson or Ichikawa!”

Diabetic foot ulceration
Diabetic neuropathy can make the feet quite numb. This may lead to excessive rubbing or pressure on the skin that goes unnoticed. Eventually an ulcer or open wound develops that exposes bone and tendon. This can get infected and gangrene can develop. It must be treated aggressively and cannot be ignored!

Charcot foot
Changes can happen to the diabetic foot causing a severe arthritis and painful swelling to form. This is due to neuropathy and the lack of sensation to the foot. It may require staying off your foot for weeks and special casting.

“The diabetic foot has a 10 times greater chance of being amputated.”

Diabetic do’s
* Good blood sugar control and regular visits to your GP or endocrinologist.
* **Inspect your feet daily**, especially the bottoms (you may need a mirror)
* Wear good shoes, ones that don’t pinch and have plenty of room. (you may qualify for special diabetic shoes)
* Wear nice cushioned insoles. We recommend Spenco™ insoles available at drugstores or you may qualify for diabetic orthotics.
* Apply moisturizing lotion daily to prevent cracking and fissuring of the skin.
* See your podiatrist yearly (or more often if special circumstances apply: like an ulceration or neuropathy).
* Call or come see us if ‘something’ doesn’t seem right. It is much more effective treating a diabetic foot problem early. This could include seeing a new ‘red’ spot on your foot.

Diabetic don’ts
* Smoking along with the diabetes greatly enhances your chances of needing an amputation.
* Do not treat you own foot problems if your nails are thick or if a sharp instrument is needed.
* Do not walk barefoot.
* Do not wear tight, ill fitting, or worn out shoes. Do not try and ‘break in’ shoes.
* Avoid burns or ‘thermal injury’. This could include walking on hot pavement barefooted.