

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Prevent diabetic foot ulcers, infection



By Dr. Jerry Sheen
Partner, ID Care

It is estimated that 25 million people are affected by diabetes in the U.S. One in three Americans born in 2000 will develop diabetes sometime during his or her lifetime.

It is caused by elevated sugar. This has many consequences many of which affect the feet, including poor circulation called peripheral arterial disease (PAD), slow healing, foot deformities (charcot foot disease), decreased sensation (peripheral neuropathy), and lower resistance to infection. These problems can lead to open sores in the feet which can become infected that can lead to amputation or death if not promptly and adequately treated.

If blood sugar is poorly controlled non-healing sores on the feet called ulcers can develop. Germs can enter through these sores causing a local infection of the ulcer which spread rapidly into tendon, muscle, bone and the bloodstream, requiring prolonged hospitalization and risk of limb loss or death. More than 60% of lower extremity amputations in the United States are performed in patients

with diabetes 50% of these patients require amputation of the other lower extremity within 3-5 years. There is 50% death rate among people with diabetes who undergo such amputations.

Prevention of diabetic ulcer and infection is the most important way to reduce your risk of complications. It is paramount that your sugars are well controlled once you are diagnosed with diabetes. This is best assessed by regularly checking your hemoglobin A1C level which measures control of blood sugar over a three-month time period. The American Diabetes Association recommends a level

of 7 percent or lower.

Your doctor should perform physical examination that assesses sensation and circulation of your feet. You or a family member should check your feet daily for any cuts or scrapes, or even dry cracked skin which can lead to infection. A daily routine to provide good skin care with lotions or ointments can be very helpful to reduce dry cracked skin. Toenails should be managed by a foot specialist (podiatrist) to avoid complications. Comfortable shoes with soft inserts should be worn to avoid pressure points that can lead to callus formation, blisters,

deep tissue injury and eventual ulcers. Finally, smoking is an additive risk for this problem. You should work very hard to stop if you are a diabetic.

If you develop diabetic foot ulcer(s), management should be supervised weekly by a specialist trained in wound care for faster healing rate and prevention of serious complications. Proper management includes improving control of blood sugar, assessment of and improving circulation to the feet if reduced, cleaning of the wound with debridement to remove unhealthy tissue and bacterial load, diagnosing and treatment of infection by

providing the correct antibiotic therapy, advanced wound dressings, and adjunctive treatments such as skin grafting, hyperbaric oxygen (HBO). It is also important to address pressure points. One way this can be done is a special technique such as total contact cast application.

If you are diabetic prevention through good blood sugar control and vigilance for any early signs of problems in the foot is critical. If you have a foot ulcer, request a referral from your primary care physician for wound care specialist consultation for optimal management.

GROW

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Project Grow spans one acre and consists of a full garden and 12 raised beds of flowers, produce and herbs. It is made possible through strong community partnerships, which include MCCC, Developing Real Expectations for Achieving Mastery Program, Rutgers Cooperative Extension and most recent Rotary District 7510.

During my visit in late July, I had the opportunity to visit and tour the gardens. Upon my arrival to the horticulture area of campus Francis, one of the program's participants couldn't wait to greet me and show me the flowerbeds she is growing lush with zinnias, straw flowers, dusty millers and nasturtiums. Francis has learned to flower arrange. It is her job, and she is successful.

"Coming here gives me purpose and makes me feel good. Look at my rosemary. Look at the green beans. Look at the flowers," she said with pride and excitement.

"Horticultural therapy is valuable and important. I see what its done for Francis who is in her 70s," said MaryAnne McMillan, registered horticultural therapist and president of the American Horticultural Therapy Association, a non-profit organization and the only national U.S. organization committed to the promotion and development of horticultural therapy to improve human well being. In 2011 McMillan received the AHTA John Walker Community Service Award at its 38th national conference.

"Our farm program offers consumers to get



PHOTO COURTESY OF LAURA DEPRADO

Left to right: Nick Stryker, farmer and student intern in horticultural therapy, Doug and Ross Talbot, Hamilton West High School seniors, MaryAnne McMillan, a registered horticultural therapist with Allies Inc., and Kurt Tobie, Steiner High School senior working on the Project Grow farm on the West Windsor campus of Mercer County Community College.

outside, get physical, learn horticulture, seed propagation, harvesting and recipes through the nutrition component of the program," McMillan added.

I also met, talked with and watched the collaboration of three high school student volunteers for nearly two hours working and earning community service hours to build their resumes. On this day they created two flowerbeds.

"At first I had no interest," said Ross Talbot, a Hamilton West High School senior, who was working with his twin brother, Doug. "I love the progress I see. It's so positive to see something birth, and nurture and raise it to maturity," he said.

Doug added, "I will encourage my peers to volunteer to farm, landscape and earn community service hours, so they know what its like to work."

Steiner High School junior Kurt Tobie, said he

loves planting anything. "This is my first time at the gardens. My job is to weed and mulch today. It's so rewarding."

Nick Stryker is the farmer fulfilling the practicum portion of his studies in horticultural therapy through online courses at Kansas State University, and working toward becoming an HTR, or registered horticultural therapist. "My role is split between farmer and HT," he said. "I work with higher functioning adults ages 21 and older with autism. This program provides vocational and social outreach for participants."

"Project Grow could not be possible if it wasn't for the college, which has been so generous in allowing us to use all the horticulture facilities including the building, the land, the greenhouses and the garage," McMillan said. According to Don Tretola, senior vice president for public affairs and program development, future plans in-

clude increasing community partners by 50 percent. An example may include providing a food pantry with fresh produce and herbs, and welcoming in turn, their volunteer services.

"Our goal is to increase the number of volunteering of individuals and groups," Tretola said.

Allies Inc. also operates three stores in Somerville, Mount Holly and the newly opened Green-sleeves Boutique in Flemington, a green initiative to provide gently worn clothing and fabulous vintage finds to the public, while providing on-site job training and education to individuals with disabilities.

To learn more about partnering with Allies Inc. or volunteer opportunities, contact Kelly Beach at kbeach@alliesnj.org.

Laura DePrado is a horticultural therapy practitioner. Email laura@finaltouchplantscaping.com.

POUNDS

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To lose a pound a week, a person needs a deficit between their diet and their activities of about 500 calories per day. But there are also a lot of physiological challenges to dropping weight.

"Just because you know the right thing to do doesn't mean you can do it on your own," said Dr. Susan Yanovski, co-director of the Office of Obesity Research at the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, a part of the National Institutes of Health.

Yanovski recommends people see their doctors before they start a weight-loss program.

"You'd like to get a whole picture so you know, 'How much at risk am I for my weight.' Your doctor can help you figure out if you want to go it on your own or if you want to early on get some additional help," she said.

Doctors can also tell if patients have risk factors, such as high blood pressure, high blood sugar or high cholesterol, which could make it more important for them to lose weight.

If weight loss is needed, the first thing people might try doing is setting an initial goal for themselves of about 5 percent of their overall weight, Yanovski said. So, a woman who weighs 180 pounds might set the goal of losing 9 to 10 pounds.

"If you find you are not losing that 5 percent of your weight, maybe we need to bump it up a notch," she said.

That might be the time to seek the help of a dietitian, a lifestyle coach or another nutrition professional, Yanovski said.

The most effective

treatments are "high intensity comprehensive lifestyle interventions" — programs that have patients meet face-to-face with a professional for six months or more, Yanovski said.

Similarly, some people find success with commercial-based weight-loss programs, she said.

Surgical options

There's three types of bariatric surgeries, all of which restrict the amounts patients can eat to roughly 1,000 to 1,200 calories per day, LeMaitre said.

» Gastric band surgery places a plastic balloon around the stomach, which creates an hour-glass effect on the stomach, LeMaitre said. The band creates a bottleneck that slows the food as it moves from the upper chamber into the rest of the stomach. As the smaller chamber fills with food, the stomach sends the brain a signal telling the person they feel full.

» The sleeve gastrectomy trims the stomach to the size of a banana. Reducing the stomach means a person can eat less, but it also reduces the amount of ghrelin, the appetite stimulant hormone, the stomach produces.

» Gastric bypass surgery creates a smaller stomach and reattaches it to a lower portion of the intestines, essentially bypassing a section of that organ. The result is the person eats less food and is also bypassing the calorie absorption in the bypassed section of intestines, LeMaitre said.

All the bypass surgeries help patients drop 50 percent to 60 percent of their excess body weight.

Bakery

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Keyword

Tradition of freshness

Founded in 1991 in downtown Chicago, Corner Bakery Cafe offers its signature breakfast, lunch and dinner fare to diners in over 160 outlets across 17 states and Washington (the first two locations in New Jersey — in Princeton and Moorestown — opened this year).

Among its specialties, which incorporate over 40 produce items delivered fresh daily, are egg dishes such as the Anaheim Scrambler, which features bacon, tomato, cheddar cheese and avocado served alongside potatoes or fruit and toast, as well as new pancake entrées served with bacon, eggs and fresh berries.

At lunchtime, a range of salads, soups, chili, sandwiches and paninis — especially the top-selling Chicken Pomodoro Panini, made with chicken, spin-

ach, fresh basil, tomatoes and cheese on country bread — is available to diners, while dinner entrées such as the tangy Pesto Cavatappi with chicken provides another example of the signature varieties offered.

"We also offer four different kinds of freshly roasted coffee with free refills, a broad selection of homemade muffins, pastries, croissants, bagels and other baked goods, and an extensive kids' menu," Race said.

"The best part? Everything is extremely reasonable, with nothing on the menu priced over \$8.99," he said.

Making strides in the rapidly growing "fast casual" restaurant segment, which marries consumers' increasing need to eat on the run affordably with their desire for healthier menu options, Corner Bakery Cafe is aiming high in the Central and North Jersey markets, thanks to Race and CEO Nirav Mehta, whose Warren-based Yum and Chill Restaurant Group includes Golden Corral Buffet and Grill in Freehold,

AT A GLANCE

Corner Bakery Cafe is at 6400 Hadley Road (across from the Middlesex Mall). Hours are 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Sunday to Thursday and 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Friday and Saturday. For more information, call 908-769-6177 or visit www.cornerbakerycafe.com.

Taco Bell in Jersey City and now the first of what they hope will be 20 Corner Bakery Cafes within seven counties in New Jersey — Middlesex, Somerset, Monmouth, Ocean, Union, Hudson and Bergen — in the coming decade.

"While we serve breakfast, lunch and dinner, we're unique in that we also have an extensive catering arm, which diners and fast-casual competitors typically don't offer," Race said, referring to the popular breakfast baskets and satisfying lunch spreads that Corner Bakery Cafe provides for corporate meetings, parties and family events.

Community effort

In addition to comfortable seating for 110 inside and 24 on the outdoor patio, dark wood décor and

warm colors achieve Race's goal of "making guests feel comfortable, like they're in their own living room."

At the same time, images on the wall highlighting the specific neighborhoods they serve — in South Plainfield, this includes a mural featuring pictures of the town's signature clock, municipal building and a statue paying tribute to firemen — help ensure that every location reflects the local landscape.

"We're also committed to giving back to our local communities and are excited to be raising funds for 'Pink SOCS' (Sisters of Cancer Survivors, started by a South Plainfield teacher), which supports families that have been affected by cancer, during our opening week (through Aug. 22)," Race said.

"South Plainfield is a small, close-knit community, and though Corner Bakery Cafe is a large franchise, they like to be involved in the communities they serve and will be a great fit here," said South Plainfield Mayor Matthew Anesh, who participated in a ribbon-cutting last Friday.

"In addition to helping to raise money for a local charity and supporting other local initiatives, they've created jobs for 65 individuals, which we immediately promoted to our local residents through social media so that they'd be among the first to apply. The restaurant's menu is great and we're excited to welcome them to town."

"We're thrilled to be here," said the restaurant's general manager, Don Colucci, an Old Bridge resident who has worked in the restaurant and hospitality industry for 35 years. "Though Corner Bakery Cafe is located all over the country, it's a fresh, new concept here that offers something for every taste. We're excited to introduce ourselves to the South Plainfield and

surrounding market and to get going."

As part of its opening month's festivities, guests will enjoy the opportunity to win free paninis for a year, as well as Corner Bakery Cafe's signature catering. But with plans to open its next location in North Brunswick by late 2014 and another location in Bridgewater the following year, Race, who grew up in Bridgewater and subsequently returned to raise his family there, said they have only just begun.

"We're all about great-tasting, fresh food served by nice people in a friendly atmosphere," he said. "We feel honored to come into the Middlesex County area and believe that the good people of South Plainfield will love us."

"Our warm, inviting neighborhood atmosphere and freshly prepared food help build long-term relationships with our guests," Corner Bakery Cafe CEO Mike Hislop said. "We're excited to open in South Plainfield and are sure the neighbors will enjoy the Corner Bakery Cafe experience for years to come."