

Patient information

Congratulations your ulcer has healed What next?

So you think your ulcer has healed?

Congratulations, it may have taken some time to get to this stage so it's important to follow these guidelines to ensure it remains healed.

The ulcer may appear as if it has closed and it's no longer weeping. However, the new tissue that has formed is very fragile and vulnerable and unless we take it slowly it may break down again.

Water and moisture cause the skin to swell. This not only affects wound closure and the healing process, but can facilitate the entry of bacteria and increase the risk of a wound breaking down becoming infected. It is therefore important to protect your wound reliably from germs and water for a while yet.

The Podiatry team have developed a pathway for when ulcers have JUST healed to protect your foot health – your podiatrist will discuss this through with you and provide advice of any adjustments.

Why would I need to follow this procedure?

Research tells us that if you have had an ulcer before this increases the risk of further ulceration so it's important we ensure the area is completely healed.

You have had a foot ulcer which has taken some weeks to heal and above your risk of re-ulceration is greater if we do not follow this process.

What should I do?

Week one

Keep your dressing on and dry as you've been doing. We're going to treat it as if it's still ulcerated to give the new tissue time to really repair and renew.

Week two and three

We want you to continue to keep the skin dry – so no getting it wet in the shower / bath just yet. However we'd like you to remove the dressing at night and moisturise the area. In the morning reapply a dry dressing – the podiatrist will advise you on this.

Week four

Following review by your podiatrist they may decide that you can now remove the dressing. However we still want you to keep the area clean AND DRY – so still no baths or showers yet.

Week 5

If on review at week 5 your podiatrist will now advise you if you can get your foot wet. Some people may require a further 2 weeks keeping your foot dry. Avoid soaking the feet – swimming should still be avoided for a while longer.

How soon will I be able to resume normal activities?

Continue to rest. Your podiatrist will advise you on slowly returning to your usual activities.

When to seek help:

Continue to check your feet daily. If the dressing is still being used check the area around the dressing.

- Is there any new pain
- Does the foot feel hotter?
- Has it become more red?
- Is there any swelling?
- Is there any discharge?
- Do you have any flu-like symptom?

If you notice ANY of these then please contact your GP or go to A+E. Then please call podiatry on the number you have been given.

Will I have to come back for more appointments?

Yes. Whilst your ulcer was healing you may have been given temporary shoes.

Your podiatrist will ask you to bring in your footwear so we can review it and ensure it will be appropriate for you in the future. We will continue to review you within podiatry once your ulcer is completely healed.

When can I return to work?

Your podiatrist will advise you.

Sources of information

Podiatry team

Important information: Individual Advice

Earliest date to remove dressing during day: _____

Earliest Date of Water Exposure for you : _____

Moisturiser recommended for you: _____

Contact Telephone numbers
Podiatry / Foot protection Team
0300 13 14 536

Multi-Disciplinary Foot Care Team
0300 13 14 736

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is not provided to replace professional clinical advice from a qualified practitioner.

Your comments

We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments, please contact the Patient Experience Team – Tel: 0300 131 4731 or by email at: esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net

Hand hygiene

The Trust is committed to maintaining a clean, safe environment. Hand hygiene is very important in controlling infection. Alcohol gel is widely available at the patient bedside for staff use and at the entrance of each clinical area for visitors to clean their hands before and after entering.

Other formats

If you require any of the Trust leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department.

Tel: 0300 131 4500 Email: esh-tr.AccessibleInformation@nhs.net

After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask your nurse or doctor.

Reference

The following clinicians have been consulted and agreed this patient information
Mika Dave At Risk Foot Podiatry Consultant & Sandy Regan Specialist Podiatrist

The directorate group that have agreed this patient information leaflet:

The Podiatry Department have agreed this patient information leaflet

Next review date: December 2023
Responsible clinician/author: Mika Dave At Risk Foot Podiatry Consultant

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