

# Appendix L: Suggestions for Assessing and Selecting Shoes and Socks

## Shoes

- Shoes should be comfortable and should match the shape of your foot.
- Have both feet measured each time shoes are bought. Feet will get longer and wider with age.
- Buy new shoes late in the day since feet often swell or enlarge during the day. Buy shoes to fit the larger foot if there is a difference.
- Shoes should fit 10 to 12 mm beyond the longest toe.
- Choose shoes with a wide and deep toe box.
- When buying shoes, wear the type of socks that you will be wearing with those shoes.
- Buy shoes with laces or velcro closures. These provide more support, distribute pressure around the sides and top, and allow adjustment for swelling.
- Shoes should have good non-skid soles, closed toes and heels, with no ridges, wrinkles or seams in the linings (good running shoes or walking shoes are recommended).
- Avoid slip-on shoes, shoes with pointed toes and sandals, especially sandals with thongs between the toes.
- Do not wear shoes with heels higher than 1 inch (2.5 cm) as they increase pressure on the metatarsal heads.
- Begin wearing new shoes gradually. Inspect the feet after each hour of wearing time for areas of redness that indicate potential problems.
- Do not wear any shoes longer than 6 hours without removing. Each pair of shoes fits differently and distributes pressure differently.
- Check shoes before wearing for small stones or puckered or bunched up areas.
- If shoes have caused a foot problem, they should no longer be worn.

## Socks

- Wear clean socks everyday. Cotton or wool is best to absorb perspiration.
- Socks should fit well. Avoid tight elastic at the top.
- If wearing knee-high hosiery, ensure it has a wide band at the top.
- Check socks for irritation or bunching. Avoid seams if possible.
- Do not wear mended socks as they may cause an area of pressure.
- Do not wear socks with holes as they may cause an area of friction.

Adapted from:

International Diabetes Federation (2005). Diabetes and Foot Care – A Time to Act. Retrieved from [http://www.idf.org/webdata/docs/T2A\\_Introduction.pdf](http://www.idf.org/webdata/docs/T2A_Introduction.pdf)  
International Diabetes Group & International Working Group on the Diabetic Foot. In Lorimer, D. L., French, G. J., O'Donnell, M., Burrow, J. G., & Wall, B. (2006). *Neale's Disorder of the Foot*. Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone Elsevier.

Zangaro, G. A. & Hull, M. M. (1999). Diabetic neuropathy: Pathophysiology and prevention of foot ulcers. *Clinical Nurse Specialist*, 13(2), 57-65.