

## If you don't have appropriate footwear

If you do not have well-fitting shoes (and insoles if you need them), discontinue using them and try to stay off your feet as much as possible.

Contact us using our Hamilton centre phone number, and you will be able to speak with an Orthotist who will guide you further.



Ill-fitting shoes can cause rubs which can lead to skin breakdown.

If you do not wear shoes, you are at greater risk of skin breakdown from standing on something sharp and from your foot not being properly supported.

## Contacts

### Hamilton Centre

Diabetes and vascular clinics

222 Pembroke Street

Hamilton 3204 New Zealand

FreePhone 0508 679 245

Email [info@osw.co.nz](mailto:info@osw.co.nz)

### Orthotic House

Children, orthopaedics, neurology, rheumatic disorders, post-polio and life-long conditions.

56 Pembroke Street

Hamilton 3204 New Zealand

FreePhone 0508 679 245

Email [info@osw.co.nz](mailto:info@osw.co.nz)

[www.osw.co.nz](http://www.osw.co.nz)

# OSW

Orthotic Service Waikato

Te Ratonga Tauteka Waewae Waikato

## FACT SHEET

# How to look after your feet during COVID-19 self-isolation



## About our services

As a result of the COVID-19 shutdown, we are required to close our doors whilst New Zealand is at Alert Level 4.

We understand that this must be a worrying time for our patients and we want to provide some advice on how you can keep safe during this time whilst you are not able to come to appointments.



## Check your feet daily

Look at the bottom of your foot on a daily basis (with a mirror if you have difficulty seeing all of the bottom of your foot) or ask someone else who you are in isolation with to check the bottom of your foot, for any signs of skin breakdown.

If you see something you are concerned about, take a photo if you can, and call the normal centre phone number (phone numbers for each centre can be found on the back of this fact sheet). We have had our phone lines redirected during this time and you will be able to speak with an Orthotist.

If you discover a blister or a wound on your foot, phone your GP/District Nurse/Podiatrist.

## Moisturise your feet daily

Remember, "Dry skin lets the bugs in". DO NOT moisturise in between the toes.

If you do not have a prescribed cream, you can purchase Aqueos cream from the supermarket or pharmacy, or ask a family member if they are able to do this.

Make sure that you have enough lotions and medications, particularly if you have a respiratory condition or recurrent infections. Although the pharmacies will remain open during the shutdown, reducing interactions with others will help to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and any risk to you.

## Wear appropriate footwear

Wear well-fitting shoes and socks (and insoles if you have them).



If you have never received diabetic footwear, look at the shoes you have at home to ensure they are as close to the following criteria as possible:

- Look for shoes which are made with leather that is soft and stretchable.
- Remember that shoes with laces have better support and fit better. They can also be adjusted if you experience swelling in your feet.
- Ensure your socks are not tight-fitting, do not have constricting cuffs, prominent bumps or seams.
- Always wear your shoes with socks to prevent any rubbing and manage moisture in your shoes.
- When you have your shoes on and laces tightened, you should be able to insert your finger between your heel and shoe. If this is not possible, your shoes may be too tight for you.
- DO NOT over tighten your laces or straps. Remember, if your sensation is compromised, over tightening your shoes can cause problems with circulation and skin breakdown. Make your shoes snug, but never tight. Keep your shoes laced tightly enough so your feet will not slide forward in the shoe.
- Do not lace your shoes so tightly that the laces cause pressure marks.
- The shoes should not leave your feet red or any marks on your skin. This can mean that they are not the right fit for you.

For the most up to date information on the Covid 19 pandemic, please visit the **Ministry of Health** website on [www.health.govt.nz](http://www.health.govt.nz) and [www.covid19.govt.nz](http://www.covid19.govt.nz).

