

Foot Notes

Stand Up For Your Feet

(NAPSA)—Most people walk nearly 115,000 miles in their lifetimes—the equivalent of walking around the world five times.

One person who knows the toll life can take on someone's feet is Katy Rowland.

"Foot care should be a number-one priority, especially for the more than 20 million Americans with diabetes," she said. "Diabetes can cause changes in the skin of the feet and nerve damage which impairs the sensation of feeling. It shouldn't be taken lightly since unhealed diabetic foot ulcers account for more than 60 percent of all nontraumatic lower limb amputations."

As senior vice president of clinical services for National Healing Corporation, Rowland is on the leading edge of foot-wound care for the firm, which manages 20 percent of the nation's wound healing centers.

She offers these tips that everyone can use to put their best foot forward:

- Your feet contain 25 percent of all the bones in your body. Buy shoes that fit comfortably without expecting them to stretch to fit.

- Most people's feet are two different sizes. Stand up when having your feet measured so that they are at their maximum width and length.

- Your feet contain a quarter of a million sweat glands. You should always wear seamless socks with shoes and change them daily.

- Medicare and many health care providers will reimburse a certain amount of money for shoes



Foot health is particularly important for people with diabetes. Exercise can be a step in the right direction.

and custom inserts prescribed by a doctor. Don't buy more than one insert at a time since the size and shape of your feet may change.

- Cut toenails straight across at a length slightly longer than the tips of your toes. Use an emery board to smooth the corners.

- Diabetics should never go barefoot and need to inspect the inside of their shoes daily for torn linings and foreign objects. They should also examine their feet each day for blisters, cuts and scratches using a mirror to see the bottoms of their feet. People with a chronic wound, one that has not healed in more than 30 days, should seek medical treatment.

Visit www.nationalhealing.com to locate a wound healing center nearby.