

Foot Care



Did you know?



Black Diamond Road
Cannifton, Ontario
2007

Families often have questions about how foot care is provided to their family members while living in a long-term care home. We will answer some commonly asked questions.

Do residents in E.J. McQuigge Lodge receive regular foot care?

Residents have a comprehensive foot assessment completed by a nurse within the first seven days after admission, and are reassessed every three months. The assessment includes discussion of the main complaint, last foot care service visit, medical history, medications that affect the health of the feet, type of footwear, socks, ambulatory status, skin and nail condition and overall foot condition. Ulcers, corns, callouses, fungus, hammer toes, numbness and/or pain are also observed. Based on the assessment, toenail care is provided as a part of regular bathing.

Are different types of foot care provided?

There are two types of foot care advanced foot care and basic foot care. Advanced foot care delivered by a registered staff member with specialized training, chiropodist or podiatrist may be requested by the resident or suggested by the care team. This service is provided at an extra cost to the resident, based on a fee guide. Both chiropodists and the podiatrists are regulated health professionals licensed by the College of Chiropodists. Certain diseases or medications suggest the need for specialized foot care services, including care for ingrown toenails, thickened toenails, fungal toenails, corns, calluses, diabetic foot care, orthotics, insoles and care for arthritic feet. Basic foot care is provided to all residents as a component of the bathing and

grooming service. There is no extra cost to the resident for this service.

What is the difference between advanced foot care and basic foot care?

Chiropodist care is delivered by a chiropodist regulated by the College of Chiropodists of Ontario. Chiropodist services include primary foot care, rehabilitation and maintenance of foot health, biomechanical assessment of foot and lower limb, gait analysis, prescription and manufacture of insoles and foot orthoses, treatment of dermatological conditions, and treatment of foot and pathological toenails such as the treatment of fungal-infected nails. The frequency of chiropody visits is based on the assessment and/or treatment prescribed by the chiropodist. Fees for chiropody services are paid by the resident.

Basic foot care is delivered by a member of the nursing staff as a component of basic bathing and grooming, and includes cutting the toenails and moisturizing the skin. Basic foot care is included in the nursing and personal care delivered to all non-diabetic residents.

How often is basic foot care provided? Basic foot care is provided as required based on the resident's needs and the observed conditions of the feet. It is included as part of the bathing process and includes general observation of the condition of the skin, toenails, skin colour and the presence of pain or discomfort. Basic foot care may be provided once monthly or on a different frequency depending on need and identified on the care plan.

Like other care interventions, residents need to consent to foot care. It would be considered an infringement of residents' rights to force a resident to submit to foot care. Some residents are resistant to foot care due to other medical conditions, and therefore the frequency of foot care changes based on the willingness of the resident to accept it.

What medical conditions could exist to make toenails gnarly?

The thickness, shape, colour, and growth rate of the nails change with age. Normal aging causes the nails to become dry and brittle and flat or concave instead of convex. Nails often become grossly thickened and distorted. Nail condition is exacerbated by chronic disease, years of poor foot care or ill-fitting footwear. Diseases such as osteoarthritis can cause significant disfigurement of the joints of the toes affecting the toenails.

What medical conditions could exist to result in fungal growth on toenails? Fungal infections can be caused by many factors including injury, microtrauma from ill-fitting shoes, circulatory diseases, diabetes and nutritional malabsorption.

What do I do if I have questions about the foot care my loved one is receiving? First, feel free to talk to the personal care/nursing staff assigned to your family member's care and they will try to help you. If you still have questions, please see the Director of Nursing who will be pleased to follow-up with you to answer your questions or discuss the option of a referral to the chiropodist for additional foot care.