The Issue:
- Diabetes is the leading cause of lower extremity amputations and their precursors, lower extremity ulcers. It is estimated that each year, several hundred New Mexicans will lose one or both legs due to diabetic neuropathy. Having diabetes increases one's risk of amputation 15-40 fold.
- Amputations are not the full story. Patients with diabetes who have a reduction in the ability to detect light touch and vibration are at high risk of developing ulcers unless there is attention to an ulcer-prevention regimen of self-care, appropriate footwear, and physician/professional monitoring.
- While treating established foot ulcers is clinically complex and costly, preventing foot ulcers can be done cost-effectively.
- All patients with diabetes should have routine foot screening. Most medical practices can institute a simple screening protocol, administered by a nurse or medical assistant, that will allow the detection of patients at higher risk for developing lower extremity ulcers.

New Mexico's Numbers:
- Lower Extremity Amputation Episodes Among Persons with Diabetes in New Mexico, 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic Statistics</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Persons with Amputations</td>
<td>372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Amputation Episodes</td>
<td>340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Age at Amputation (years)</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Who Is at Greatest Risk for Amputation?
- American Indians with diabetes are 3.5 times more likely to have an amputation than are non-Hispanic Whites with diabetes.
- Males are twice as likely to have an amputation as females.
- Risk of amputation increases with age; the greatest risk is among those age 65 years and older.

Sources:
Resources for Clinicians

The following resources are FREE and can be downloaded from the New Mexico Health Care Takes On Diabetes website at www.nmtod.com. For further information contact Charm Lindblad, Executive Director, at 505.796.9121 or toll-free 1.866.796.9121.

Diabetes Foot Examination Form: A Practitioner Tool—Searching for a comprehensive diabetes foot examination form? Well look no more! This form can be used to document completed diabetes foot exams each time the diabetic patient comes in for a visit. This form includes key questions a health professional can answer after examining the patient’s feet. There is a space to document vascular findings, the level of sensation, and skin conditions on a foot diagram. Health care professionals who provide foot exams for diabetic patients will find this form very comprehensive and easy to use. This form can be found on the New Mexico Health Care Takes On Diabetes website.

Risk, Management and Footwear Categories: A Practitioner Tool—A practitioner tool has been developed to help identify risk categories for a patient without current ulcerations on their feet. This tool helps identify potential complications in the diabetic population with recommendations for management and patient education. Factors such as patient’s self reporting, evaluation self-practices, provider visits on a regular basis, protective footwear and patient education have been found to be significant protectors of feet. This form can be found on the New Mexico Health Care Takes On Diabetes website.

Monofilament Resources: Purchasing Monofilaments—Monofilaments are a cost effective method of testing for the presence or absence of protective sensation. The LEAP website includes organizations that sell monofilaments. http://bphc.hrsa.gov/LEAP

Diabetes Foot Screen: A Patient Self-Exam Handout—Screening for loss of protective sensation (LOPS) is a key step to minimizing or eliminating the devastating effects of peripheral neuropathy. Careful monitoring of the feet with a foot screen form can help identify patients at high risk for plantar ulceration. This simple form with step-by-step instructions will help the patient examine his or her own feet and encourage the patient to share the exam results with the PCP’s office in an effort to maintain comprehensive medical records and provide the appropriate referral to a foot care specialist when needed. This form can be found on the New Mexico Health Care Takes On Diabetes website.

Websites—The editorial committee has identified a select number of websites about foot care:

- American Diabetes Association: www.diabetes.org
- Feet Can Last a Lifetime: www.niddk.nih.gov/health/diabetes/feet/feet.htm
- Lower Extremity Amputation Prevention (LEAP) Program: bphc.hrsa.gov/LEAP
- For Health Care Professionals: ADA Position Statement: Preventive Foot Care in People With Diabetes: Diabetes Care 26:S78-S79, 2003. care.diabetesjournals.org/cgi/content/full/26/suppl_1/S78
- For Patients: Taking Care of Your Body: Foot Care: www.diabetes.org

These websites may be accessed directly or through the New Mexico Health Care Takes On Diabetes website.*

*Please note that these websites do not necessarily represent the views of New Mexico Health Care Takes On Diabetes. They are listed for your reference and convenience. NMHC/TOD does not evaluate websites for content accuracy or application to any clinical situation.

Editorial Committee:

Patty Anello, RN, BSN, CNN
Cindi Caruso, BUS
Mary Fluckey, MS, CHES, CPHQ
Jan Hitchens, RN
M. L. Johnston, MS, RD, CDE
Charm Lindblad, MHA
Bruce A. Mann, MD, FACP
Erin McDonald-Bicknell
Stephen Ryter, MD, FAAP
Leslie Shainline, RN, MS
Laura Valdez, RN, BSN

Graphic Layout: Anna Dykeman, MA
New Mexico Medical Review Association

Advisory Board:

Mark Burge, MD
Assoc. Prof.- Medicine, Endocrinology and Metabolism/Director of Clinical Trials
Department of Medicine and Endocrinology
UNM Health Sciences Center

Nathaniel G. Clark, MD, MS, RD
Nail, VP, Clinical Affairs
American Diabetes Association

Donna Tomky, MSN, RN, C-ANP, CDE
Nurse Practitioner, Dept. Endocrinology & Diabetes, Lovelace Sandia Medical Center

Jeremy Gleeson, MD, FACP, CDE
Medical Director, Endocrinology, Lovelace Sandia Health Systems

Steven S. Wregge, DPM
Foot & Ankle Specialists of New Mexico

Copyright 2006 by New Mexico Health Care Takes On Diabetes. May be reproduced without restriction in New Mexico and for educational purposes. Permission for other use outside New Mexico may be obtained at 505.796.9121. These materials were developed under a contract with the New Mexico Department of Health, Public Health Division.