

ABSTRACT

Upon being diagnosed with diabetes mellitus, Diabetes Australia recommends at least yearly foot assessments by a podiatrist. The purpose of a foot assessment is to identify the relative risk of undergoing lower extremity amputation. After risk is calculated, the patient is to be directed down a path of appropriate management in response to this risk classification. The aim of management is to reduce complications associated with the disease that can lead to lower extremity amputation and varying management techniques have been studied and found effective. Therefore a foot assessment needs to produce data to help identify the level of risk for the patient to undergo lower limb amputation. This paper will look at the epidemiology of lower extremity amputation and other factors associated with diabetes. Then it will discuss the important components for a foot assessment and appropriate tests that can be undertaken quickly and reliably in the clinical setting.

Key words: assessment, foot amputation, diabetic foot, risk classification, ulceration, risk factors.

Australasian Journal of Podiatric Medicine
2003; Vol 37, No.4 : 101-109

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