

PROTECTING FEET THAT HAVE NUMBNESS

Protecting feet that have numbness is critical. When the feet are numb, as in many cases of neuropathy, the natural warning system is impaired. With a lack of feeling, special efforts to protect the feet must be taken.

Inspect the feet, top and bottom and between the toes, each day.

Check inside shoes before putting them on. Be sure that nothing has fallen inside.

Avoid temperature extremes such as prolonged cold exposure. If you have good feeling in your hands, test bath water to be sure it is not too hot before putting your feet in.

Wear shoes to protect your feet. Make sure shoes fit well. When feet are numb, there is a tendency to fit shoes too tight. Make sure there is a finger width between your longest toe and the end of the shoe when standing.



Brian Gardner, D.P.M. *Podiatrist*

Dr. Brian Gardner specializes in foot and ankle surgery, wound care, biomechanics, sports medicine, diabetic foot care, and general foot care.



[facebook.com/UintahBasinHealthcare](https://www.facebook.com/UintahBasinHealthcare)



www.ubh.org



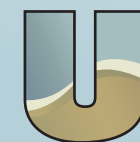
435.725.2025, Roosevelt
435.781.2030, Vernal



250 W 300 N Clinic #2 Suite 203 (Level 2),
Roosevelt, Utah
379 N 500 W, Vernal, Utah



PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY



The Clinic
UINTAH BASIN HEALTHCARE

Peripheral neuropathy refers to disorders of the nerves which are outside of the central nervous system (nerves which are away from the brain and spinal cord). Unfortunately, this problem is all too common. Peripheral neuropathy can have various causes and produce many different symptoms.

SYMPTOMS

Symptoms that involve the feet may include burning, tingling, numbness, or shooting pains. At times, the feet may be overly sensitive. Even common sensations can be irritating, such as the wearing of shoes, walking on carpet, etc.

CAUSES OF NEUROPATHY

Sometimes, the cause cannot be absolutely identified. However, there are several known causes of peripheral neuropathy.

Known causes of peripheral neuropathy include:

- Diabetes (the most common cause)
- Alcohol toxicity
- Thyroid abnormalities
- Nutritional deficiencies, such as inadequate Vitamin B12 or the inability of the body to utilize vitamins and nutrients
- Illnesses such as Guillian-Barré Syndrome
- Inherited conditions that affect the nerves
- Entrapment of nerves, which can occur with back problems, sciatica, or tarsal tunnel (a pinched nerve near the inside of the ankle)
- Growths that press on nerves
- Injury to nerves
- Drugs used in the treatment of cancer, AIDS, and other conditions

TREATMENT OF NEUROPATHY

Treatment for peripheral neuropathy depends on the cause. Blood tests or nerve conduction studies may be used to check for various causes. If an underlying cause can be identified, such as diabetes, then treating that cause is important. Injections or even surgery can relieve a pinched nerve, if that is the cause of your symptoms.

Though symptoms may sometimes improve, the sensations such as numbness do not always go away. If pain is associated with neuropathy, your doctor may recommend trying a cream such as capsaicin, which is available without a prescription.

Oral medications are used for other conditions such as seizures or depression (i.e., Neurontin, Elavil). A new medicine, Lyrica, is now available and is indicated for neuropathy. Often, a low medicine dosage is given initially to see if it helps and to learn if there are any potential side effects such as drowsiness. Many individuals find that neuropathy is most irritating when trying to go to sleep, as there are no distractions from the irritation. A mild analgesic, such as acetaminophen (Tylenol), taken a short time before going to bed is often helpful.

