



dance out diabetes

## Diabetes in Real Life

### Spa Sense: A Guide to Safe Pampering

Warm weather means showing more skin and putting those pretty pink toes on display. While many healthcare professionals will tell you that people with diabetes should leave foot and skin care to a physician, the cost, availability, and aesthetics of a “doctor versus spa” treatment has many women (and men) disregarding that advice.

If you do decide to go the spa route, you should do your homework on their cleanliness and capabilities before you visit. Diabetes puts you at a higher risk of infection and foot and skin problems. It's also important that your blood glucose is well controlled, you have no skin or foot problems, and you've had an informed discussion with your doctor and/or podiatrist about spa treatment.

### A Clean, Safe Place

Find a spa or salon you can trust. Asking your podiatrist for a referral is a great place to start. All equipment and tools should be sterilized between customers. For pedicures, that includes the spa foot bath and (if applicable), the piping system to the foot bath. Some people choose to bring their own nail and skin tools to prevent cross-contamination, which isn't a bad idea as long as you remember to sterilize them at home.



### Communicate

Be open about your diabetes to get the best results. A good facility will take steps to protect you while they beautify. For example, some spas may offer a waterless pedicure to avoid the risks associated with a spa foot bath. Or, you can do a “light” pedicure with simple moisturizing, light nail filing, and polish – and leave any callous work for the podiatrist.

### Know Your Limitations

If you suffer from any degree of neuropathy, heat treatments are not a good idea as you won't feel a damaging burn. Stay away from microdermabrasion or chemical peels – the risk for skin injury is just too great. And if you have any cuts or abrasions on your skin, skip the spa until you are completely healed. Infecting those wounds isn't worth the mani-pedi.

### Massage and Reflexology

Here's a spa luxury that can actually be good for your diabetes. Research has shown that massage techniques lower stress and improve circulation, two key health benefits for anyone living with diabetes. Plus, it just feels amazing. Body wraps may also be beneficial to circulation; again, if there are any abrasions or openings in the skin they aren't a good idea.



The mental health benefits of a few hours of pampering, done by a professional in a hygienic environment, truly can lower your stress levels and your blood glucose. So spoil yourself.