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Establishment of a multidisciplinary foot clinic: Patient characteristics and outcome regarding healing and amputation.

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Objectives: To evaluate the effect of a multidisciplinary foot team on the incidence of amputation and the frequency of foot ulcers healing in diabetic patients.

Design: Prospective cohort study. **Setting:** Patients referred 1996-2004 from general practitioners and hospital departments to a multidisciplinary diabetic foot clinic. Secondary referred patients from the catchments' area were included in the study.

Subjects: Patients (n=596) with diabetes mellitus type 1 and 2 and ulcer below the ankle.

Results: Patients were predominantly male (61%) and 85% had type 2 diabetes. There was a significant difference in age between men (mean 67,6 years) and women (mean 72,0 years) ($p < 0,001$). Current or former smokers constituted 54% of all patients with mean age (66,8 years) significantly lower than the non smokers (70,8 years) ($p < 0,001$). Within 12 months 69% of the patients healed and 78% healed in 24 months. The total amputation rate decreased during the study period from 11,3/100 000 inhabitants in 1996 to 6,5/ 100 000 inhabitants in 2004 due to the reduction of major amputations from 7,8 to 4,4/100 000 inh. **Conclusions:** Patients presenting with diabetic foot ulcers as well as those undergoing amputation showed a gender difference in age. Women were significantly older. Tobacco use seems to be more detrimental in women than in men. The establishment of a multidisciplinary foot clinic reduced the number of major amputations over time by 44% and compared to historical controls at the same hospital by 53%.