Diabetic Foot Course Program

Fellowship 2026 · Duration: 8 weeks · Format: Online
Start: October 2026 · Language: English

Program Directors

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Week 1: Introduction and Key Concepts

- Definition of diabetic foot: epidemiology, clinical impact, and socioeconomic burden.
- Pathophysiology of diabetic neuropathy: pathogenesis, risk factors, and structural changes.
- Peripheral arterial disease in the diabetic patient: pathophysiology and clinical relevance.
- Charcot foot (Charcot neuroarthropathy): mechanisms, clinical stages, and early diagnosis.
- Importance of a multidisciplinary approach: roles of specialists in diabetic foot management.
  - → *NEW: Patient education and prevention strategies — primary screening, risk stratification, and home care fundamentals.*

Week 2: Comprehensive Assessment of the Diabetic Foot

- Comprehensive clinical assessment:
  - Foot inspection: skin changes, deformities, and visible lesions.
  - Palpation: assessment of peripheral pulses and temperature.
  - Functional tests: sensation, reflexes, and strength.
- Risk assessment and wound classification tools:
  - Wagner classification.
  - PEDIS system.
  - Texas classification.
  - **WIfI classification (Wound, Ischemia, foot Infection) — current SVS/AOFAS standard.**
- Vascular assessment fundamentals:
  - Ankle-Brachial Index (ABI) — indications and technique.
  - Toe pressure and TcPO2 measurements.
- Diagnostic and therapeutic planning:
  - Prioritisation of treatments based on severity.
  - Coordination of the multidisciplinary team.

Week 3: Diabetic Foot Infections

- Identification and initial management:
  - Clinical signs of infection: erysipelas, cellulitis, abscesses.
  - Identification of critical and high-risk infections.
- Microbiology of diabetic foot infections:
  - **Biofilm: pathogenesis, clinical impact, and anti-biofilm strategies. (IWGDF 2023)**
  - **Antimicrobial resistance: MRSA, ESKAPE pathogens, and microbiological sampling techniques.**
- Advanced diagnosis:
  - Imaging methods: X-ray, MRI, ultrasound.
  - Role of bone biopsy in the diagnosis of osteomyelitis.
- Surgical management of infections:
  - Debridement: types (selective, radical) and techniques.

  - Use of negative pressure wound therapy (NPWT).
  - Use of antibiotic-impregnated cement in diabetic foot infections.

Week 4: Medical and Antibiotic Treatment / Types of Diabetic Foot Wound Care

- Antibiotic management:
  - Basic principles: indications, regimens, and duration of treatment.
  - Coordination between infectious disease specialists and surgeons to optimise therapy.
  - Monitoring and evaluation of response to antibiotic therapy.
- Classification and care techniques:
  - Moist vs. dry dressings: indications and benefits.
  - Active dressings and their role in healing: bioactive dressings, hydrogels, and alginates.
  - Negative pressure wound therapy (NPWT): indications, techniques, and clinical benefits.
- Innovative technologies and advanced therapies:
  - Bioactive materials: collagen membranes, silver- or honey-based dressings.
  - Regenerative therapies: growth factors, dermal matrices, and emerging technologies.
  - **Hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT): indications, evidence base, and patient selection criteria.**
  - **Enzymatic and larval debridement: principles and clinical indications.**
- Role of specialised nursing teams:
  - Daily management and application of wound care.
  - Monitoring of wound-healing progress.
  - Education for patients and caregivers on appropriate wound-care management.

Week 5: Conservative/Surgical Treatment of the Diabetic Foot / Charcot Foot 1

- Offloading strategies:
  - Use of total contact casts (TCC), custom insoles, and devices.
  - Specific indications for each technique.
- Conservative management of Charcot foot:
  - Immobilisation during the acute phase.
  - Pharmacologic therapies to reduce inflammation.
- Monitoring technology and prevention of recurrence:
  - **Plantar thermometry for early detection of Charcot reactivation.**
  - **Smart wearables and digital monitoring devices: current evidence and practical use.**
  - Basic home care and patient education for ulcer recurrence prevention.
- Surgical options for the diabetic foot:
  - Soft-tissue reconstruction.
  - Surgical approach for recalcitrant ulcers and osteomyelitis.

Week 6: Conservative/Surgical Treatment of the Diabetic Foot / Charcot Foot 2

- Surgical treatment of Charcot foot:
  - Internal and external fixation.
  - Reconstructive procedures to restore function.
- Minimally invasive surgery (MIS) in the diabetic foot:
  - **MIS techniques for deformity correction in the diabetic foot — Footexperts approach.**
  - **Indications, contraindications, and outcomes in the neuropathic patient.**
- Functional amputations:
  - Amputation vs. limb salvage criteria.
  - Techniques to maximise functional preservation.
  - Postoperative rehabilitation and prosthesis use.
- Orthoplastic surgery:
  - Skin grafts: autologous and synthetic options.
  - Flaps for coverage of extensive defects.

Week 7: Advanced Multidisciplinary Assessment and Treatment

- Advanced vascular assessment:
  - Imaging techniques: Doppler ultrasound, MR angiography, CT angiography.
  - Functional assessment: ankle–brachial index and perfusion tests.
- Practical criteria for vascular referral:
  - **When and how to refer to vascular surgery: decision algorithms and clinical thresholds.**
  - **Coordination between foot surgery and vascular surgery teams — practical clinical pathways.**
- Vascular surgery:
  - Endovascular revascularisation: indications and outcomes.
  - Bypass surgery for critical limb ischaemia.
- New TBT (transverse bone transport) revascularisation techniques with external fixation:
  - Technique using external fixation for complex cases.

Week 8: Future Perspectives and Case Discussion

- Advances in diabetic foot management:
  - New technologies: 3D printing, smart materials, and cellular therapies.
  - Impact of artificial intelligence on diagnosis and monitoring.
- Interactive clinical cases:
  - Facilitated discussion of complex cases.
  - Practical application of acquired knowledge.
- Platform-based assessment and final examination:
  - Online quizzes and knowledge checks throughout the course (Footexperts platform).
  - Final clinical case evaluation — platform-based assessment.
  - Certification: accredited title of Fellow Specialist in Diabetic Foot upon successful completion.
- Course wrap-up and conclusions:
  - Key takeaways.
  - Future challenges in clinical practice.