

Trial of shoe insoles to improve balance in diabetic patients

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Vital clues may be disrupted between the feet and brain for people with diabetes. Credit: University of Queensland

Shoe insoles are being trialled to improve balance, walking and physical activity in adults with type 2 diabetes and associated foot nerve damage.

Dr Anna Hatton from The University of Queensland's School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences said many people with diabetes experience problems with their balance and walking due to foot nerve damage.

"Diabetic peripheral neuropathy, a consequence of diabetes, can increase

the risk of falls and serious injuries requiring hospitalisation," Dr Hatton said.

"The quality of signals transmitted from the feet to the brain when damaged, disrupt the vital cues required to help people remain upright.

"Using shoe insoles to correct balance and walking problems in people with diabetic peripheral neuropathy could lead to meaningful change to people's independence in their daily lives."

Every day 280 Australians develop diabetes - that's one person every five minutes - and the total annual cost impact of diabetes in Australia is estimated to be \$14.6 billion.

To be eligible for the study, participants are required to be over 18 years of age, diagnosed with type 2 [diabetes](#) and [diabetic peripheral neuropathy](#) (foot nerve [damage](#)) and be able to walk a distance of 20 metres, with or without an assistive device.

The study will be based at UQ's St Lucia campus and participants will be required to wear a pair of shoe insoles for four weeks and a small activity monitor on the leg for 14 days (two separate weeks).

More information: The trial is supported through funding from Diabetes Australia.

Provided by University of Queensland

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