

# Taking Steps Towards Improving Foot Care

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# Background

- Burlington Housing Authority – South Square Apartments
  - Elderly
  - Disabled
- March 2006 Survey
  - Foot Care as Top Priority of Residents



# Guidelines

*Persons with diabetes should receive annual comprehensive foot evaluations and self-care education.*

*-American Diabetes Association*

Available at [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org)  
Accessed December 1, 2006.



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# Guidelines

*Seventy-three percent of patients said their feet were not routinely inspected at doctor visits.*

*-American Podiatric Medical Association*

Meadows M. Taking care of feet. *FDA Consumer*.  
March-April 2006.



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# Objectives

1. Understand background of problem and barriers to care
2. Provide foot care and education



# Foot Clinics

- 2 clinic days – 2 hours each
- Recruit via sign-up sheets and memos
- Four medical students, One MD per clinic
- 18 participants



# Pre-Clinic Survey

- Age
- Health Insurance
- Visits to Primary Care Provider
- Self-Exam Frequency
- Diabetes?
- Foot Conditions
- Knowledge of Self-Care



# Foot Clinics – Cont.

- Examine Feet
  - Pulses
  - Ulcers
  - Deformities
  - Trim Nails
- Educational Handout
  - One-on-One Instruction





# Post-Clinic Survey

- Foot Education Quiz – True or False?
  - 1) The best time to buy shoes is early in the morning. (*F*)
  - 2) It is best to check your feet daily. (*T*)
  - 3) You should look between your toes when examining your feet. (*T*)
  - 4) It is okay to put lotion between your toes. (*F*)
  - 5) You should take your shoes and socks off when you go to your primary care provider. (*T*)
  - 6) It is okay to cut corns or calluses. (*F*)
  - 7) Closed toed shoes are best for people with diabetes. (*T*)
  - 8) Foot infections are the most common reason for hospitalization in people with diabetes. (*T*)
- Clinic Satisfaction

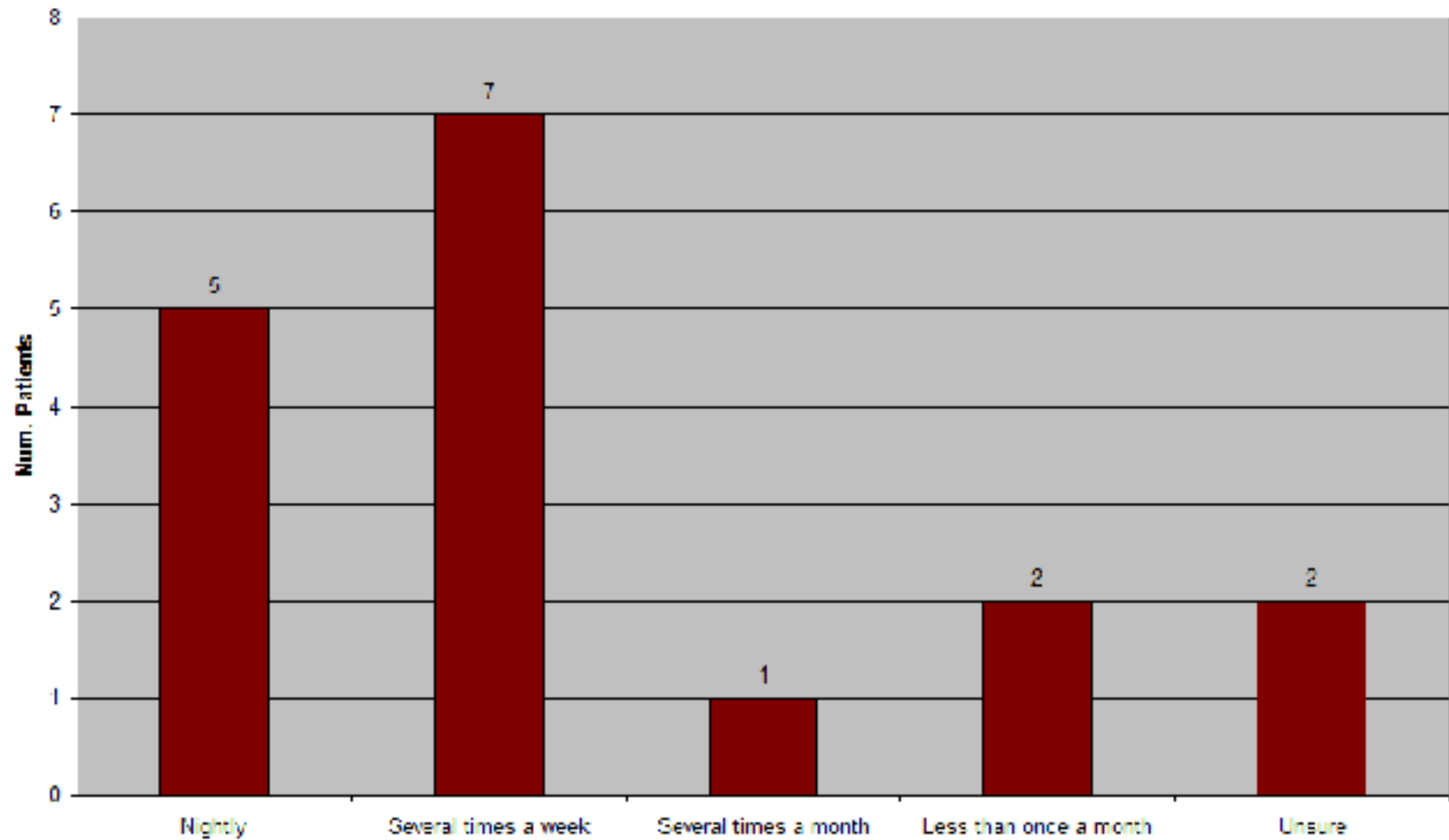


# Demographics

- 18 patients: 6 diabetic; 12 non-diabetic
- Age: 50 – 90+ yrs.; most 60-69 yrs. old
- “Good” or “Fair” Health: 14 of 18
- More than half can trim own toenails
- Avg. 2-3 foot conditions
  - “circulation problems”
  - “athlete’s foot/fungal infections”
  - “blisters”



## How Frequently Do You Check Your Feet?

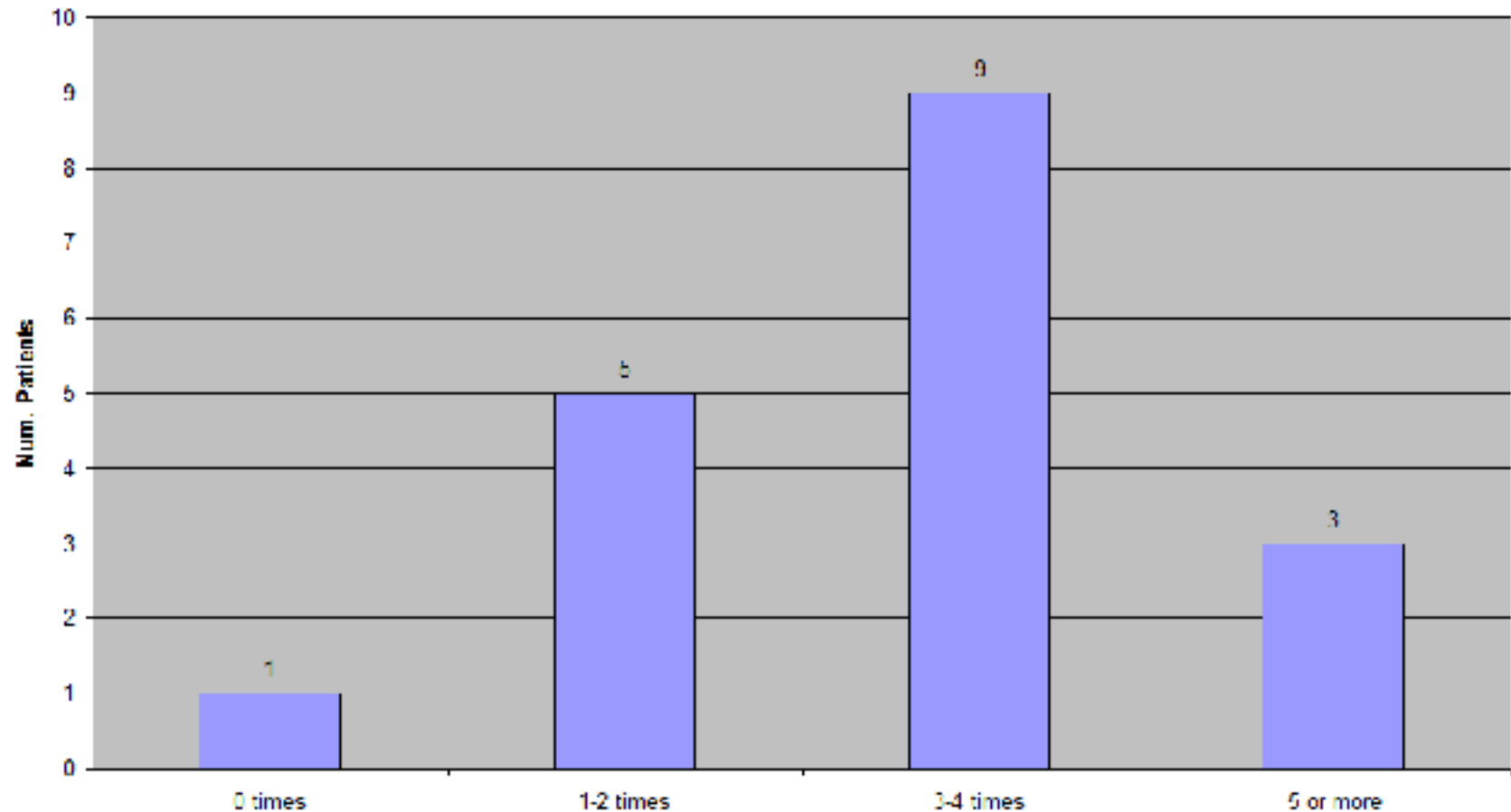


# Demographics

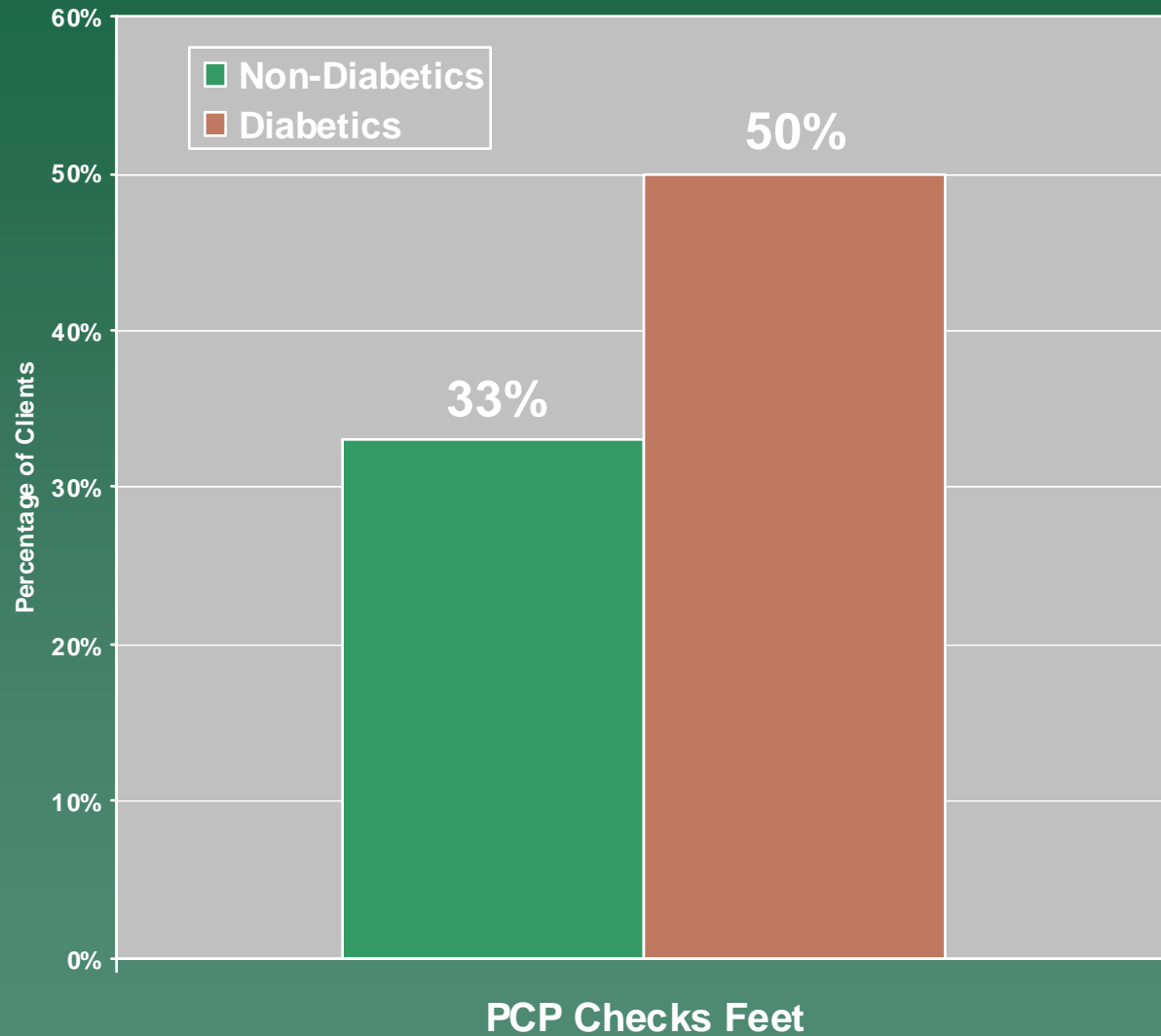
- 17/18 (94%) Clients had Health Insurance
- 18/18 (100%) had a Primary Care Provider



## How Many Times Have You Been to the Doctor in the Last Year?



# Do PCPs Check Feet?



# Discussion

- Patients have seen PCP in last year
- Guidelines recommend annual foot exams
- PCP not checking feet
  - Disconnect between guidelines and practice



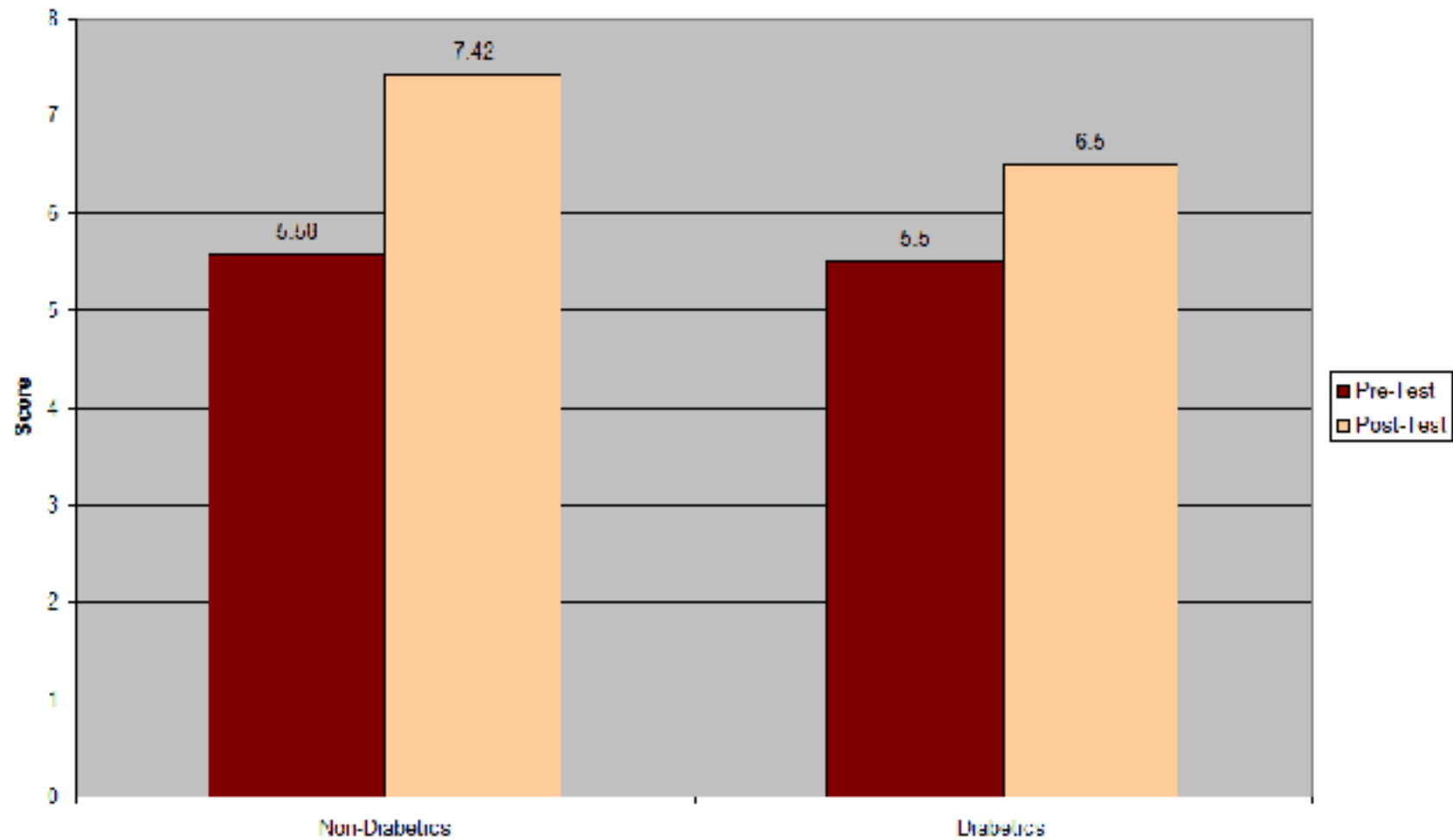
# Results

- 100% said “Very educational”
- 100% said “Very likely to check their feet”
- 15/18 would check feet “daily”
  - Remainder would check “occasionally”





## Average Pre/Post Test Scores



# Discussion

- Foot Clinic as Screening Opportunity
  - Catch what PCP's are not seeing
- Foot Clinic as Educational Opportunity
  - Survey educational scores improved
  - Increase Self-Exams
    - “... *Very likely to check feet*”
  - Increase Clinical Exams
    - “...*Take off shoes and socks*”



# Next Steps

- Weaknesses
  - Limited resources
  - Small sample size
- Follow-up study needed
  - Has this increased PCP exams?
  - Has this improved self-care practices?



# Take-Home Challenge

- Assess adequacy of foot-care exams in your community
- Assess need for foot-care clinics
- Promote PCP involvement



# Questions?

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