



Do you have shooting pain or stabbing pain in your extremities (hands or feet)? Do you also suffer from diabetes? Patients with diabetes can often have localized nerve damage that in turn may cause long-term or chronic pain. Such pain is called DPN, **diabetic polyneuropathy**, or sometimes **diabetic peripheral neuropathy**. Doctors might have a difficult time diagnosing DPN and its origins, so please be sure to tell your doctor if you have diabetes and now have chronic pain in your hands or feet.

WHAT IS DIABETIC POLYNEUROPATHY?

Diabetic polyneuropathy (DPN) is a complication of **diabetes**, a disease in which patients show high levels of blood sugar over a prolonged time period. These high blood sugar levels can damage different body parts including nerves. It is estimated that about 20% of diabetes patients suffer from DPN according to a large observational study conducted in the UK.

WHAT CAUSES DIABETIC POLYNEUROPATHY?

Diabetic polyneuropathy (DPN) occurs if nerves are damaged as a result of diabetes. Because nerves are damaged, DPN is a type of **neuropathic pain**. Damaged nerves cannot correctly transmit signals from the skin to the brain. Instead, these signals become exaggerated, causing chronic pain that may persist for months or even years.

WHAT ARE THE TYPICAL DIABETIC POLYNEUROPATHY SYMPTOMS?

Although diabetic polyneuropathy (DPN) can affect all body parts, it is most commonly localized to the extremities, such as the hands or the feet. This is why DPN is also referred to as a type of **localized neuropathic pain (LNP)**. The chronic pain associated with DPN can be described as 'shooting pain' or 'stabbing pain'. Although less common, some patients can experience itching or numbness.

WHAT CAN PATIENTS DO?

Medication can help and early treatment might influence efficacy in a positive way, so it is important to get active. Do you have symptoms that you would describe as 'shooting pain' or 'stabbing pain'?

If you have diabetes and think that you might have DPN, please fill out the 'my pain questionnaire' on www.mypainfeelslike.com and see your doctor at your earliest convenience. Be sure to tell your doctor that you have diabetes and now have chronic pain in the affected area.