

## INTRODUCTION

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Diabetic foot ulcers (DFUs) are considered important complications of diabetes and are also one of the most common causes of amputation because 85% of amputations were preceded by DFUs.<sup>1</sup> Every 20 seconds, a limb is lost in the world due to diabetes and its complications.<sup>2</sup> Peripheral neuropathy is a major contributing risk factor for DFUs, and its presence cannot be reversed. However, the other causative factors can be modified. One of the most common factors contributing to chronic DFUs is trauma.

## NEED FOR OFFLOADING

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Different types of forces are applied on the foot at rest or during any activity, namely the compressive force, shear force, frictional force, and tensile force. DFUs occurring on the plantar aspect of the feet are caused by loss of protective sensation and a combination of increased or prolonged compressive, sheer, or frictional forces, which can contribute to trauma or tissue failure, resulting in the formation of DFUs. It is seldom a singular force that can be responsible for DFUs but usually a combination of the above. The soft tissues are protected by the neural feedback mechanism, which enables the body to make slight movements to offload or reload under these excessive forces. However, in a neuropathic foot, this feedback mechanism does not occur, and damage is more likely to occur, resulting in the development of DFUs.<sup>3</sup> Apart from increased plantar pressure, limited joint mobility is also an important determinant of the occurrence of DFUs. Offloading refers to alleviating the pressure either on sensitive or painful areas which in turn can help in the healing of DFUs. The ultimate purpose of offloading is to promote healing and prevent the recurrence of DFUs.