

## Diabetic Foot Awareness –“From Foot Attack to Diabetic Foot Storm”

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**Abstract:** Diabetic foot is a known and depressing complication seen in patients with diabetes. If neglected either by patient or clinician, then outcome is obvious and it is amputation. Once a complication sets in, it brings with it many problems that would be difficult for a patient to deal with. Hence, various preventive strategies have come into picture that aimed at decreasing this complication. One such method is by campaigning. This article aims at discussing the 2 terms in diabetic foot that can be used to bring awareness on this dangerous complication of diabetes.

**Keywords:** Diabetic foot, Attack, Storm, Complications, Problems.

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### INTRODUCTION

Diabetic foot disease is a complication of diabetes mellitus and it is one of the most feared complications both for the patients and treating clinicians [1]. The incidence of the diabetic foot disease is rising and it is one of the commonest reasons for admission in hospital in patients with diabetes [2].

Diabetic foot can result in amputation which can cause substantial loss of productivity and finances [3]. Around 80% of people who have undergone foot amputation are likely to die within 5 years [4]. More than half of the patients who have undergone major amputation die within 2 years [5]. It is also known that 25-50% of the patients undergo amputation at their first visit due to foot infections [6].

Owing to the fact that diabetic foot treatment is expensive, its best that it is prevented [7]. The different strategy of prevention is providing foot care education, screening the foot and also through campaigning. It is well known that preventive strategies reduce morbidities and mortalities in diabetic foot [8].

Two terms were recently introduced to bring in more awareness of this devastating complication among health care people.

### DIABETIC FOOT ATTACK

The term ‘foot attack’ is being used to describe an injury to the feet of diabetes patients having underlying neuropathy or peripheral vascular disease [9]. According to Vas *et al.* diabetic foot attack can present as “*an acutely inflamed foot with rapidly progressive skin and tissue necrosis*” [10].

This term tries to convey the urgency needed for diabetic foot in similar lines of heart attack so that timely intervention is done. Recently, it was seen that Diabetes UK was promoting a campaign that aims at preventing “foot attacks” [5, 9]. According to it, foot attack should be considered as a medical emergency requiring immediate attention.

### DIABETIC FOOT STORM

This term was recently coined by Amit Jain from India [11] who designed the principle and practice of diabetic foot, which is the modern diabetic foot surgery system [12, 13]. The term

“diabetic foot storm” was derived based on the new classification of problems of diabetic foot and this was to create further awareness for the neglected complication from India [14].

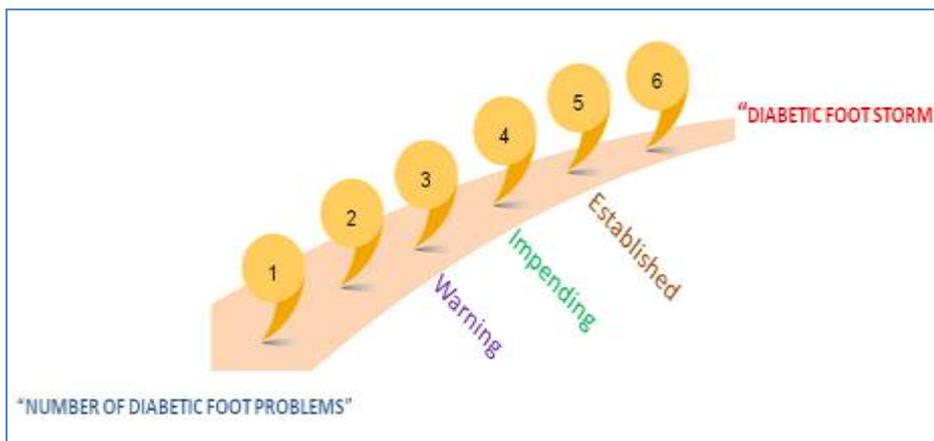
“Storm” word is used to explain a crisis in the disease course [11] and it frequently has its synonyms being hurricane, cyclone, tornado, etc, but the former is being more frequently used and accepted worldwide. Thyroid storm, cytokine storm, electrical storm etc are some of the well-known terms in medical literature and the author

introduced this new term in similar lines for diabetic foot [11].

A recent Amit Jain’s classification for problems [14] in diabetic foot had divided all problems in 6 simple categories (Table 1). If a patient has gone through any of the 3 problems, then he should be warned of a storm that can occur. If he has gone through any of the 4 problems, then there is an impending storm to occur (Figure 1). Once a patient has 5 or more problems, the patient is considered to have gone through the storm [11].

**Table-1: Amit Jain’s classification for problems in diabetic foot**

Categories of foot problems	Type	Examples
Category 1	Preponderant	Diabetes mellitus
Category 2	Current	Abscess, Gangrene, Ulcer, etc
Category 3	Concurrent	Hypertension, IHD, CKD, etc
Category 4	Recurrent	Re-ulceration, Re-admissions, etc
Category 5	Subsequent	Mortality, Major amputations, etc
Category 6	Supplement	Financial issues, Loss of job, etc



**Fig-1: Pathway towards the diabetic foot storm based on Amit Jain’s classification of problems in diabetic foot (Image courtesy from Amit Jain’s Institute of diabetic foot)**

This term is likely to produce an impact on diabetic foot prevention strategies and will provide an important message to all on consequences a patient can have with diabetic foot and there will be an emphasis on prevention of this ignored complication.

**CONCLUSION**

Health care professionals play an essential role in preventing diabetic foot complications. Hence, apart from educating patients, it is essential to educate them too of this deadly disease. Familiarity of these two terms among them is likely to create more awareness of Diabetic foot worldwide.

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