

# A Collaborative Effort in the Screening of Foot Abnormalities for Home Free and Low-Income Participants with or without Diabetes



**Monica S. Vasquez, DNP, APRN, FNP-C, WCC, ACHPN**  
The University of Texas at El Paso



## Introduction

Approximately 1 in 5 El Pasoans live in poverty with a decreased access to education, healthcare, childcare, and employment (Elpasotexas.gov, 2023). An estimated 15% of El Paso adults live with diabetes exceeding the U.S. estimation of 9.4%. According to the American Diabetes Association (2023), people with or without diabetes can develop foot problems that can worsen and lead to serious complications. Preventative screenings can help catch potential pathology. Many initiatives are in the works to increase access to preventative screenings.

## Methods

H.O.P.E+ (Home free. Outreach. Prevention. Education.) is an initiative founded in 2016 through the leadership of Eva M. Moya, Ph.D., associate professor of social work, and Guillermina Solis, Ph.D., assistant professor of nursing. This health fair, originally held at the Opportunity Center for the Homeless in Central El Paso, is put together by a collaboration of dozens of community partners (UTEP, n.d.). This author leads the foot exam station in which undergraduate nursing students and graduate family nurse practitioner (FNP) students provide free comprehensive foot exams.

- 3-4 exam rooms created for more privacy
- Undergraduate nursing students
  - Cleanse participants' feet
  - Using screening tool, examine for abnormalities including use of a monofilament to assess for neuropathy (Sibbald, et al., 2012). Completed forms are given to the participants.
- FNP students
  - Educate undergraduate nursing students on foot exam
  - Assess abnormalities
  - Log in referrals to community resources



## Conclusion

It is evident that access to care and community resources remains a concern. A comprehensive foot exam for persons with or without diabetes can help catch potential pathology timely so that the appropriate referrals can be made. More data regarding issued referrals will be available for future abstracts. Collaborative efforts, such as this H.O.P.E. initiative, will help to bridge the gap to improve access to healthcare.



## References

American Diabetes Association. (2023). Diabetes Foot Complications. <https://diabetes.org/diabetes/foot-complications>

Elpasotexas.gov (2023). Annual Action Plan City of El Paso, Texas 2023-2024. <https://www.elpasotexas.gov/assets/Documents/CoEP/Community-Development/Forms-and-Notices/2023-NOFA/2023-2024-DRAFT-Annual-Action-Plan-new.pdf>

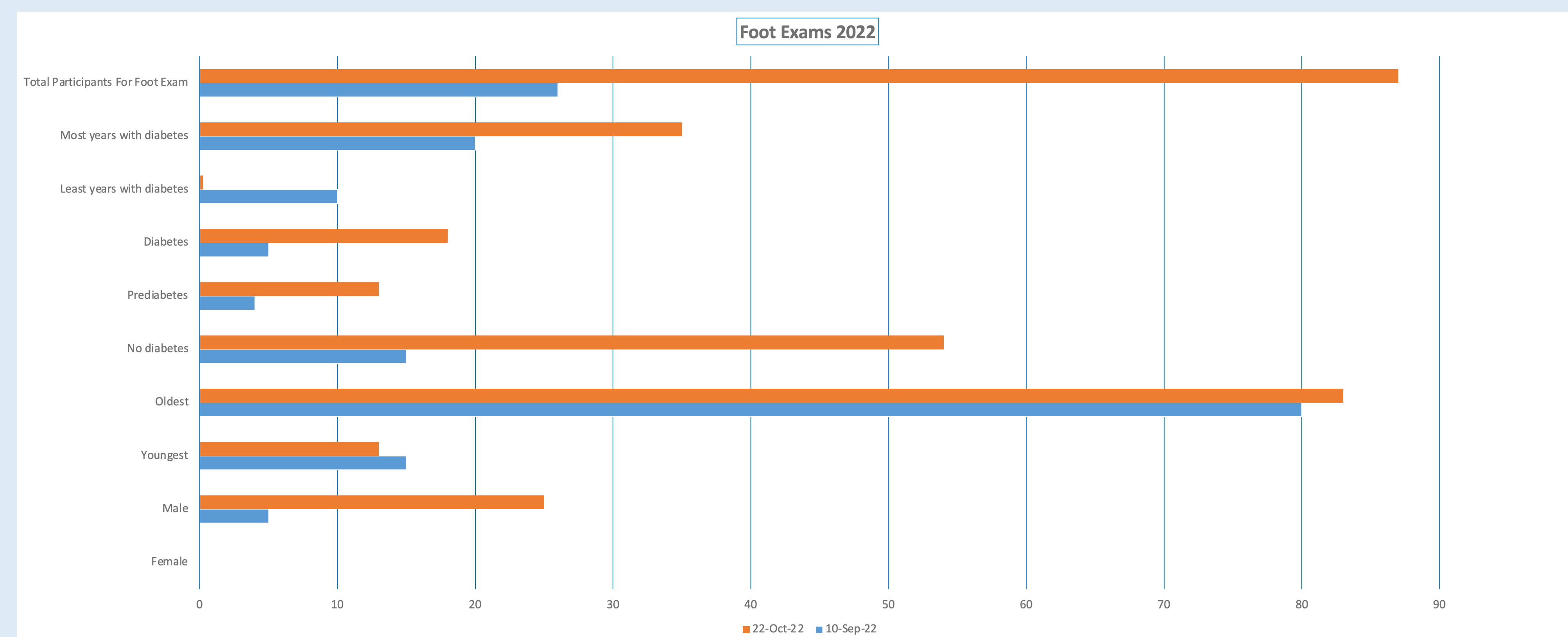
Paso Del Norte Health Foundation (2022, December 25). Diabetes, Now What? <https://pdnhf.org/health-articles/diabetes-now-what#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20El%20Paso,Paso%20adults%20living%20with%20diabetes.>

Sibbald, R. G., Ayello, E. A., Alavi, A., Ostrow, B., Lowe, J., Botros, M., Goodman, L., Woo, K., & Smart, H. (2012). Screening for the high-risk diabetic foot: a 60-second tool (2012). *Advances in skin & wound care*, 25(10), 465-478. <https://doi.org/10.1097/01.ASW.0000421460.21773.7b>

UTEP (n.d.) Bringing the H.O.P.E+ (Homefree. Outreach. Prevention. Education)+ to the community. <https://www.utep.edu/nursing/news/bringing-the-hope-homefree-outreach-prevention-education-to-the-community.html>

## Results

Since 2021, nine H.O.P.E. fairs have been completed in various areas of the border city of El Paso. Several referrals have been made for podiatrists, diabetic shoes, and primary care providers. Available data from 2022 shows that a total of 113 participants were seen by our undergraduate nursing and FNP students in just two H.O.P.E. fairs.



Assessment Findings	RISK	Foot Care	Diabetic Shoes	Diabetic Socks	Activity
No Neuropathy	0	1-2	None	Diabetic socks	As able
Neuropathy	1	4	Professional fit	Diabetic socks	As able
Diabetes	2a	3-4	Professional fit	Diabetic socks	As able
Prefootwear	3b	3-4	Professional fit	Diabetic socks	As able
Ulcer, Healed	4a	3-2	Professional fit	Diabetic socks	As able
HLA Antigen	1b	1-2	Professional fit	Diabetic socks	As able