

FOOTPRINTS

AN INFORMATIONAL NEWSLETTER FOR PATIENTS OF APMA MEMBER PODIATRISTS

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SUMMER EDITION

YOUR GUIDE TO A SUMMER FREE FROM FOOT PAIN



SUMMERTIME BRINGS WARM WEATHER, AND WHILE YOUR SANDALS AND REGULAR PEDICURES SEEM LIKE A WELCOME TREAT AFTER A LONG WINTER, THEY MAY POSE MORE PROBLEMS THAN YOU REALIZE.

⦿ WEDGES AND ESPADRILLES

Problem: Ankle twist or sprain; instability and difficulty walking

Solution: Try a wider, flatter wedge; look for a rubber sole with good traction

⦿ PEEP-TOE SANDALS

Problem: Increased pressure on toes, bunions, and hammertoes

Solution: Wear only for short periods of time; use an APMA-accepted insert

⦿ FLATS AND SLIDES

Problem: Arch and heel pain; inadequate cushioning and foot support

Solution: Avoid prolonged wear; try cushioned inserts for shock absorption; select a sole that doesn't twist excessively

⦿ PLATFORMS AND HIGH HEELS

Problem: Pain in the ball of the foot; ankle injuries

Solution: Wear lower, more stable heels (two inches or under); use an APMA-accepted insert

⦿ GLADIATOR AND STRAPPY SANDALS

Problem: Irritation between toes; callus and dead skin build-up around heels; lack of support and shock absorption

Solution: Select natural materials such as soft, supple leather; ensure proper fit with no toes or heels hanging off the edge

“Warm weather is a great excuse to show off your feet and polished toes, but flimsy flip-flops are one of the common causes of heel pain,” says American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA) President Phillip E. Ward, DPM. “Heel pain can seriously impact your day-to-day life, and if your pedicure isn't done properly, it can lead to serious foot problems like ingrown toenails and foot fungus.”

Heel pain, ingrown toenails, and foot fungus are not problems you want to deal with in the midst of pool parties, weddings, and vacations. Thankfully, there are ways to prevent these common ailments so you can enjoy a foot-pain-free summer.

Start with your shoes! To avoid heel pain and other foot problems, follow these tips when purchasing your next pair of summer footwear:

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DOS AND DON'TS FOR A FABULOUS PEDICURE:

- ❑ **Don't** shave your legs before receiving a pedicure. Shaving creates small cuts on your legs that may allow bacteria to enter your body.
- ❑ **Do** bring your own pedicure utensils to the salon. Why? Because bacteria and fungus can move easily from one person to the next if the salon doesn't use proper sterilization techniques. Yuck!
- ❑ **Don't** allow salons to use a foot razor to remove dead skin. Using a razor can result in permanent damage if used incorrectly and can easily cause infection if too much skin is removed.
- ❑ **Do** use a pumice stone, foot file, or exfoliating scrub when eliminating thick, dead skin buildup, also known as calluses, on the heel and balls of the feet. Be sure to soak your feet in warm water for at least five minutes first.
- ❑ **Don't** apply nail polish to cover up discolored nails. Thick and discolored toenails could be a sign of a fungal infection. Nail polish locks out moisture and doesn't allow the nail bed to "breathe." If you think you have a toenail infection, schedule an appointment with today's podiatrist immediately to get it checked out.
- ❑ **Do** gently run a wooden or rubber manicure stick under your nails. This step helps keep your nails clean and removes the dirt, glitter, and other types of build-up you may not be able to see.

YOUR WEDDING SEASON FOOTWEAR GUIDE

Wedding season is in full swing! From weddings at the beach to the barn, APMA has you covered with these tips to avoid heel pain:

- 1 Wear shoes that fit well—front, back, and sides—and have shock-absorbent soles, rigid shanks, and supportive heel counters.
- 2 Look for a shoe with a generous toe box area.
- 3 Inspect for cushioning at the front.
- 4 Remember: Excessive heel, wedge, or platform height can lead to instability and ankle rolls. Try keeping the height at two inches or under.
- 5 As always, treat heels like dessert—wear them sparingly!



DOCTORS OF PODIATRIC MEDICINE ARE PODIATRIC PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS, ALSO KNOWN AS PODIATRISTS, QUALIFIED BY THEIR EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND EXPERIENCE TO DIAGNOSE AND TREAT CONDITIONS AFFECTING THE FOOT, ANKLE, AND RELATED STRUCTURES OF THE LEG.



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