

Fast Facts on Podiatry

Podiatric Medicine

- There are an estimated 15,000 podiatrists practicing in the United States.
- Podiatrists receive a doctor of podiatric medicine (DPM) degree.
- Doctors of podiatric medicine receive basic and clinical science education and training comparable to that of medical doctors, including four years of undergraduate education, four years of graduate study at one of the nine podiatric medical colleges, and two or three years of hospital-based post-graduate residency training.
- Podiatric medicine is to the foot and ankle what ophthalmology is to the eye and cardiology is to the heart.

The Foot

- Each foot has 26 bones – both feet contain nearly one quarter of all the bones (206) of the body.
- Each foot is made up of an intricate network of over 100 tendons, ligaments, and muscles.
- Every step places 1.5 times your body weight of pressure on your foot (a 150-pound person places 225 pounds of pressure on the foot with every step).
- The average person walks 5,000 to 7,000 steps a day. The American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA) estimates that the average person will walk nearly 100,000 miles in a lifetime, between three to four times the earth's circumference.

Foot Ailments

- Nearly eight in 10 Americans have experienced foot problems as a result of wearing uncomfortable or ill-fitting shoes.¹
- The most reported foot ailments among Americans are heel pain, blisters, and ingrown toenails.¹
- Heel pain is the most common foot ailment, with 43 percent of Americans experiencing this condition within the past year.¹
- Six in 10 (60%) Americans who have experienced heel pain over the past year also have had trouble performing life's daily activities.¹
- Other common foot ailments Americans have experienced within the past year include pain in the balls of the feet (35%), nail problems (33%), and sweaty feet or foot odor (32%).¹
- Nearly three quarters (73%) of Americans have suffered from dry, rough, cracked, or irritated skin on their feet.¹

Foot Care

- Only a quarter (25%) of Americans who have experienced foot ailments have seen any sort of physician about their problem, and less than half that amount (12%) have visited a podiatrist.¹
- Americans ages 50 and older who have experienced foot ailments have seen podiatrists more often than their 18- to 49-year-old counterparts (20% vs. 7%).¹
- Almost four in 10 (39%) Americans who have experienced foot ailments rely on over-the-counter and self treatments for relief. Of this group, three in 10 (30%) choose to do nothing to relieve their ailing feet.¹
- The most common barriers to foot care include a lack of medical insurance (32%) and money (22%).²

¹ 2009 APMA Foot Ailments Survey, represents 1,082 women and men aged 18-60

² 2009 APMA Type 2 Diabetes Study, represents 600 men and women aged 35-65+