

# FOOTPRINTS

AN INFORMATIONAL NEWSLETTER FOR PATIENTS OF APMA MEMBER PODIATRISTS

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SUMMER EDITION

## THIS SUMMER: PROTECT FEET FROM THE HEAT



ONE PERK OF A BEACH-BOUND VACATION IS KNOWING YOU CAN LOUNGE HAPPILY WITH YOUR TOES DANGLING IN THE WARM WEATHER, SHOE-FREE WITH THE SAND AT YOUR FEET. BUT ALAS, THIS IDYLIC SETTING DOES COME WITH ITS OWN SET OF TOOTSIE TROUBLES.

“Even lying on your back soaking up the rays, your feet are still vulnerable,” says American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA) member Jane Andersen, DPM. “You can seriously sunburn your feet, and no matter how upscale your hotel, athlete’s foot can lurk in all public pool areas.”

Wouldn’t you rather spend time collecting sea shells instead of doctor bills? Luckily, there are ways to prevent foot predicaments so you can enjoy barefoot bliss:

- ☉ Limit walking barefoot as it exposes feet to sunburn, as well as plantar warts, athlete’s foot, ringworm and other infections, and also increases the risk of injury to your feet.
- ☉ Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water throughout the day. Drinking water will not only help with overall health, but will also minimize any foot swelling caused by the heat.
- ☉ Keep blood flowing with periodic ankle flexes, toe wiggles, and calf stretches.
- ☉ Activities at the beach, lake, or river may require different types of footwear, so be sure to ask the contact at each activity if specific shoes are needed.
- ☉ Wear shoes or flip-flops around the pool, to the beach, in the locker room, and even on the carpeting or in the bathroom of your hotel room, to prevent injuries and limit the likelihood of contracting any bacterial infections.
- ☉ Remember to apply sunscreen all over your feet, especially the tops and fronts of ankles, and don’t forget to reapply after you’ve been in the water.

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## THIS SUMMER: PROTECT FEET FROM THE HEAT CONT.

- ☉ If your shoes get wet, make sure they have dried out completely before your next wear to prevent bacteria or fungus from growing.
- ☉ If you injure your foot or ankle while on vacation, seek professional medical attention from a podiatric physician. Many often only contact a doctor when something is broken or sprained, but a podiatrist can begin treating your ailment immediately while you're away from home. You can find an APMA podiatrist in your travel area by visiting [www.apma.org](http://www.apma.org).

### VACATION CHECKLIST

**In case of minor foot problems, be prepared with the following on-the-go foot gear:**

- ☐ Flip-flops—for the pool, spa, hotel room, and airport security checkpoints
- ☐ Sterile bandages—for covering minor cuts and scrapes on the foot
- ☐ Antibiotic cream—to treat any skin injury
- ☐ Emollient-enriched cream—to hydrate feet
- ☐ Blister pads or moleskin—to protect against blisters
- ☐ Motrin or Advil (anti-inflammatory)—to ease tired, swollen feet
- ☐ Toenail clippers—to keep toenails neatly trimmed
- ☐ Emery board—to smooth rough edges or broken nails
- ☐ Pumice stone—to soften callused skin
- ☐ Sunscreen—to protect against the scorching sun
- ☐ Aloe vera or Silvadene cream—to relieve sunburns

Find a full list of APMA-approved products at [www.apma.org](http://www.apma.org).

## KEEP IN MIND: SUMMER FOOTWEAR TIPS



### Flip-Flops

Even the most intuitive person may have trouble deciding between the countless flip-flop colors and style choices. To minimize foot pain often caused by flip-flops, select a pair that has some support and is unable to bend in half. Blisters are typically caused by poor-fitting straps, so choose a style made of natural materials, such as soft leather, and make sure the foot doesn't hang off the edge. Heel pain sufferers should not wear flip-flops.

APMA Shoe Pick: FitFlop Limited LULU™



### Athletic Sandals

When searching for the next adventure, be sure to have a great pair of practical and supportive athletic sandals on hand. Just make sure to have traction, like ridges or treading, on the soles to avoid slips. Also, choose sandals that have a built-in support so that the foot doesn't twist. Straps and insoles should be made of natural materials. Avoid straps that are too tight, or foot circulation can become diminished.

APMA Shoe Pick: The Walking Company ABEO B.I.O.system® Topanga



### Platforms and Wedges

Towering platforms and wedges combine all the things many women love in footwear—a little bit of height, straps, and lots of style options. Be careful up there, though, because platforms and wedges can be unsteady, causing instability and problems with balance. Also, excessive height can lead to ankle rolls and falls. Try lower platforms and wedges with secure ankle straps, cork material bottoms for shock absorption, and traction for slippery conditions. When wearing this shoe type, always avoid uneven terrain.

APMA Shoe Pick: Vionic Group LLC (Orthaheel) Cancun Adjustable Wedge



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.