

# FOOTPRINTS

An Informational Newsletter for Patients of APMA Member Podiatrists

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## TODAY'S *podiatrist*

Your Foot and Ankle Specialist

**Would you see a specialist for a problem with your heart? Your back? Why not your feet? Healthy, pain-free feet are vital to keeping you active and well.**



Podiatrists attend four years of podiatric medical school, followed by a three-year, hospital-based, medical and surgical residency to become the specialists in the foot and ankle. Podiatrists treat everything from skin conditions to fractures to serious diabetic foot wounds, and they offer both medical and surgical treatments.

“You likely will pay a bit more to see a specialist,” said APMA Communications Committee Chair Priya Parthasarathy, DPM. “With the cost of living on the rise, I understand why patients might be reluctant to pay more. But my advice is to not scrimp on your health. Problems in your feet and ankles can be signs of serious health problems, and they can lead to worsening complications. See a specialist for the right diagnosis and the right care, right from the start.”

Accurate diagnosis and specialized care can shorten the overall length of your treatment and help you get back on

your feet sooner, as well. “Urgent care facilities are terrific and convenient for minor ailments or injuries,” said APMA President Sylvia Virbulis, DPM. “But for more serious issues, and especially for people with chronic conditions such as diabetes or vascular disease, it’s vital to see a podiatrist. Seeing a specialist can help you feel better sooner.”

Learn more about foot and ankle conditions that should be treated by a specialist on the reverse.

**If you have foot or ankle pain or notice a change in your feet that concerns you, it’s time to see the foot and ankle specialist. Visit [www.apma.org/findapodiatrist](http://www.apma.org/findapodiatrist) to find a podiatrist in your area or ask your primary care physician for a referral.**

# FOOTPRINTS

If you experience foot pain or any of the following symptoms, it's time to make an appointment with a podiatrist:

## PINS AND NEEDLES?



If you have diabetes and experience painful prickling, heaviness, tiredness, or other uncomfortable symptoms in your feet, you may have peripheral neuropathy, or nerve damage caused by diabetes. Neuropathy can also lead to complete loss of

sensation in your feet, which puts you at a higher risk of sustaining an injury. Foot wounds in people with diabetes can lead to systemic infection, amputation, and even death. See a podiatrist at the first signs.

## NUMBNESS?



Pain, burning, or numbness between your toes or in the ball of your foot could be signs of a benign growth of nerve tissue called a neuroma. See the foot and ankle specialist, today's podiatrist, for proper diagnosis and relief!



**Dr. Parthasarathy** is a podiatrist in practice with Foot & Ankle Specialists of the Mid-Atlantic in Silver Spring, MD.



**Dr. Virbulis** is a podiatric physician and surgeon in North Carolina. She owns a private practice and also serves our nation's veterans at the W.G. (Bill) Hefner Salisbury Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

To find a podiatrist today, visit [www.apma.org/findapodiatrist](http://www.apma.org/findapodiatrist).

## SKIN CHANGES?



Changes in the skin on your foot are red flags for a variety of conditions. Changes to the temperature of your feet or hair loss on your feet can be signs of vascular disease. Discoloration of a toenail could be a fungal infection, or it could be a sign of

skin cancer. Your best bet when you notice changes in your feet is to see a podiatrist, the foot and ankle specialist, for a proper diagnosis.

## STUBBORN INJURIES?



Rest, ice, compression, and elevation (RICE) are first aid for foot injuries. But if pain isn't improving within 24 hours, or you notice severe swelling or bruising after an injury, it's time to visit a podiatrist. Podiatrists treat traumatic injuries including

foot and ankle sprains and fractures.

## HEEL PAIN?



Plantar fasciitis is a common condition that causes sharp pain, especially after rest. But not all heel pain is caused by plantar fasciitis. Podiatrists are well-trained to properly diagnose heel pain and provide advanced, cutting-edge treatments, from

platelet-rich plasma injections to surgical intervention, for more complex cases.

Doctors of podiatric medicine are podiatric physicians and surgeons. They are also known as podiatrists, and are 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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