

During residency programs, podiatrists receive advanced training in podiatric medicine and surgery and take part in clinical rotations in anesthesiology, internal medicine, pathology, radiology, emergency medicine, and general surgery with a major emphasis placed on patient diagnosis and management in both inpatient and outpatient settings.

Unlike orthopedic residency training that does not universally require a commitment to foot and ankle medical and surgical management, podiatric residency programs must meet minimum requirements for training that includes hundreds of patient diagnoses, foot and ankle procedures, and care management.

With the requisite education and training, like other physicians, podiatrists can:

- Perform comprehensive medical history and physical examinations
- Prescribe drugs and order and perform physical therapy
- Perform basic and complex reconstructive surgery
- Repair fractures and treat sports-related injuries
- Prescribe and fit orthotics, insoles, and custom-made shoes
- Perform and interpret X-rays and other imaging studies

Podiatric Medicine in the Community

Our growing population increasingly requires the skills of podiatrists. Podiatric medical colleges, residency programs, and other training opportunities continue to prepare doctors of podiatric medicine for the growing epidemics of diabetes and obesity and their concurrent complications. Medical specialists in primary care, endocrinology, rheumatology, vascular, and geriatrics routinely refer patients to podiatrists.

In classrooms, clinics, and hospitals, podiatrists are trained to detect early warning signs, and

diagnose and treat medical consequences of diseases, such as diabetes, poor circulation, heart, and other chronic conditions that tend to manifest symptoms in the lower extremity.

The podiatric medical profession has been successful in evaluating the health care needs of the public against the backdrop of medical advancement, patient safety, and cost and efficiency in the delivery of health care. These are among the many reasons why podiatrists are essential members of America's health care team.

For more information, contact the APMA Center for Professional Advocacy at: advocacy@apma.org or 301-581-9200.