
Florida Podiatric Medical Association



Headquarters
410 North Gadsden Street
Tallahassee, FL 32301
Phone: 1-800-277-3338 • (850) 224-4085
Fax: (850) 681-0899
Website: www.FPMA.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 17, 2014

Contact: David B. Higgins, CAE
Executive Director
Florida Podiatric Medical Association
(850) 224-4085
dhiggins@fpma.com

A Podiatric Physician Should be Part of Your Diabetes Management Team

TALLAHASSEE – According to the CDC, 29.1 million Americans (9.3% of the U.S. population) have diabetes. November is Diabetes Awareness Month and is a good time to become familiar with this disease, especially given the fact that 27.8% of people with diabetes don't even know they have it! Diabetics, in particular, should also become familiar with the team approach to controlling their diabetes, which includes various physicians, including a foot doctor (i.e., podiatric physician).

People who have diabetes are unable to manufacture or properly use insulin, which impairs the body's ability to convert sugars, starches, and other foods into energy. The long-term effects of elevated blood sugar (known as hyperglycemia) can lead to serious damage to the eyes, heart, kidney, nerves, and feet. While there is no cure for diabetes, proper diet, exercise, medical care, and careful management can help a person with diabetes avoid the most serious complications and enjoy a full and active life.

Diabetes is a disease that affects many parts of the body, so successful management requires a team approach. A primary care physician is often the first doctor to diagnose a patient's diabetes and can make referrals to other specialists, including vascular surgeons, endocrinologists, and ophthalmologists/optometrists. Even dentists need to be involved in a diabetic's care.

Podiatric physicians, who are uniquely qualified to treat the foot and ankle, play a key role in helping patients manage diabetes successfully and avoid foot-related problems. Diabetes can alter nerve function as well as limit or restrict blood flow to the feet, which can lead to serious foot complications if left untreated, including amputation. The keys to amputation prevention are early recognition and regular foot screenings performed by a podiatric physician. Including a podiatric physician in diabetes care can reduce the risk of lower limb amputation up to 85 percent and lowers the risk of hospitalization by 24 percent.

Diabetes is the leading cause of non-traumatic, lower-limb amputations in the world, so it is imperative that diabetics visit a podiatric physician and have their feet checked at least twice a

year. Diabetics also need to be aware of symptoms such as loss of sensation, burning, or tingling in the feet, which should not go unchecked.

To find a podiatric physician in Florida, visit the FPMA website at www.fpma.com and click on the link entitled "Find a Podiatric Physician in Your Area", which is located on the website's home page.

For more information, contact the FPMA at (850) 224-4085.

The FPMA is a Tallahassee-based, statewide, professional association representing podiatric physicians in Florida. Founded in 1927 for the purpose of advancing the science and art of Podiatric Medicine, the FPMA is dedicated to promoting the importance of podiatric healthcare among the general public and healthcare professionals throughout the state of Florida. The FPMA currently has over 950 members and represents 70% of the active, licensed podiatric physicians in Florida.

-end-