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# Florida Podiatric Medical Association

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## **Care for Your Feet When Traveling This Summer**

**TALLAHASSEE** – Vacations can be hard on your feet, mainly because you tend to be on your feet more than usual when traveling. A good rule of thumb if you are experiencing ANY pain, problems, or discomfort with your feet or ankles is to visit a podiatric physician PRIOR TO leaving for your trip, since going on vacation can put additional stress on your feet and exacerbate existing foot problems. Also consult a podiatric physician if you seriously injure your feet while on vacation, as they are uniquely qualified to care for your feet.

Here are ten helpful tips for keeping your feet healthy and preventing foot and ankle pain and injury while traveling this summer:

1. Wear comfortable shoes that are intended for the activity you will be participating in. Depending on the activity, wearing socks is also important, since socks protect skin from shoe friction, which can lead to blisters and calluses.
2. Wear shoes AND socks when you are traveling by airplane, since you will have to take off your shoes when going through the metal detector and walking barefoot through an airport exposes your feet to bacteria and viruses that could cause plantar warts and athlete's foot.
3. Avoid bringing new shoes with you on vacation. They can be stiff and uncomfortable when first worn and vacation time is not the time to break them in.
4. Save your flip flops for the beach and pool area. Loose-fitting flip flops increase your risk of tripping, falling, and spraining your ankle and are not recommended for long bouts of walking.
5. Don't forget to also check your children's shoes for fit and comfort prior to going on vacation.
6. If you are traveling for more than a two hour period, be sure to stretch your legs, flex your feet and ankles, and wiggle your toes. This will help circulate the blood to prevent deep vein thrombosis or dangerous blood clots in the legs caused by sitting for long periods of time.
7. Place a towel on the floor before entering a shower or bathtub. This can prevent slipping when you exit. It will also help dry toes and protect them from infections.

8. Don't forget to pack a small first aid kit, including adhesive bandages, antibiotic or first aid cream, foot powder, and tweezers. You may develop blisters or scrape your feet on sharp objects when walking on the beach.
9. If you plan on doing a lot of walking while on vacation, condition your feet and legs ahead of time and begin a regular walking program wearing the shoes you plan on traveling with.
10. Don't forget to apply sun screen to the tops of your feet. Feet can sunburn too!

Don't forget to take care of your feet while traveling. It will make for a better, more relaxing vacation!

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 900 members and represents 70% of the active, licensed podiatric physicians in Florida.*

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