



AMERICAN PODIATRIC MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

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AMPUTATION PREVENTION BEGINS WITH ‘ELECTING TO SAVE YOUR FEET’

<Bakersfield, CA.> – With nearly 246 million people across the globe battling diabetes and its complications this year, staying one step ahead of the disease has never been more important. As America’s political landscape reaches an exciting culmination with November’s 2008 Presidential election, it’s also important to remember to “Elect to Save Your Feet!” More than 60 percent of non-traumatic, lower-limb amputations in the United States occur among people with diabetes. Because of this, the American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA) is launching a national campaign titled “Elect to Save Your Feet.” This campaign, run during Diabetes Awareness Month in November, aims to educate the public about the importance of seeing a podiatrist regularly to prevent diabetic, lower-limb amputations.

“Getting your feet examined by a physician during an annual checkup is one of the easiest ways to prevent most foot complications related to diabetes,” said Dr. Ross Taubman, president of the APMA. “The rate of amputation for those with diabetes is 10 times higher than those without the disease. Being vigilant in your personal footcare, and including your podiatrist in your diabetes management team, can save both your limbs and your life.”

Every 30 seconds, a lower-limb is lost to diabetes somewhere in the world. Those with diabetes are more prone to develop foot infections, called foot ulcers, which can quickly result in amputation. Preventing amputation means knowing all of the main warning signs. Other common diabetes warning signs in the feet besides ulcers include:

- A tingling or loss of feeling in the feet
- Redness
- A change in the shape of the feet
- Loss of hair
- Cuts and scrapes that are slow to heal

If you discover any of these symptoms, visit a podiatric physician immediately. A comprehensive foot care treatment plan can reduce amputation rates by 45 percent to 85 percent. Including a podiatrist in your diabetes management team – as well as having a proactive attitude about your footcare – can drastically improve your chances of managing diabetes successfully.

For more information on the warning signs of diabetic ulcers, and to learn the best way that you can “Elect to Save Your Feet,” visit www.apma.org/diabetes.

Founded in 1912, the American Podiatric Medical Association is the nation's leading professional society for foot and ankle specialists. The association has component societies in 53 locations in the U.S. and its territories and a membership of close to 11,500 doctors of podiatric medicine. For free foot health information, visit www.apma.org.

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