



## Medical Myth vs. Fact

### Specialists Set Us On The Path To Foot Health

(NAPSA)—Broken bones, ankle sprains, infections, and other serious injuries can occur at any time. Early attention to any continuous foot discomfort is vitally important. Don't be confused by misinformation, and don't treat yourself. A podiatrist can set you on the road to recovery. Here are some common misconceptions patients have:

**MYTH:** It's normal for your feet to hurt as you age.

**FACT:** Foot pain is not normal. Visit a podiatrist annually as a part of your health care routine.

**MYTH:** Nothing can be done for broken toes.

**FACT:** A toe fracture needs prompt attention. Podiatrists can x-ray the toe to determine if it's fractured or broken, and make sure it's splinted, put in a cast or immobilized properly. Surgery may be needed if a post-fracture deformity occurs, which in turn, results in formation of a painfully deformed toe with a painful corn. A good general rule is to seek treatment for all foot injuries.

**MYTH:** It's never a mistake to use over-the-counter medications for corns and warts.

**FACT:** Many of these products contain acids that could be harmful, especially for people with vascular problems or diabetes. Some remedies can cause burns or infections when used improperly. Seek the advice of a podiatrist.

**MYTH:** Ankle sprains are worse than a break.

**FACT:** Not necessarily true. Ankle sprains often mean torn or severely over-stretched ligaments and they should receive immediate care. A podiatrist can x-ray the foot to ensure a normal recovery.

**MYTH:** Soak your feet in hot water if you have a foot or ankle injury.

**FACT:** Don't use heat or hot water if you suspect a sprain, frac-



**Podiatrists are certified in at least one of these three areas: primary podiatric medicine, surgery or orthopedics.**

ture, or dislocation. Heat promotes blood flow, causing greater swelling. An ice bag or cool tub of water will help prevent swelling and pain. After you see a podiatrist, warm compresses may be used.

**MYTH:** Cut a V in an ingrown toenail to stop it from in-growing.

**FACT:** Toenails should be cut straight across, but no longer than the tip of the toes. Do not round off the corners. Use toenail clippers, or visit a podiatrist and have him or her clip your toenails for you.

**MYTH:** Bunions are caused by shoes.

**FACT:** Bunions tend to be hereditary. It is the foot type that is passed down, not the bunion. Parents who suffer from poor foot mechanics can pass their foot type on to their children, who are also prone to developing bunions. Wearing shoes that are too tight or cause the toes to be squeezed together can aggravate a bunion.

For more information about foot care, visit APMA's Web site at [www.apma.org](http://www.apma.org) or call 1-800-FOOTCARE (366-8227) to request a free brochure.