

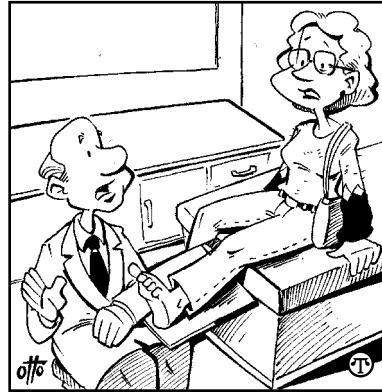
Proper Foot Care Can Help With Arthritis

(NAPSA)—Over 40 million people in the United States have some type of arthritis and the prevalence of arthritis is projected to increase 57 percent to about 59.6 million by the year 2020. The American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA) is encouraging everyone to take better care of their feet, especially if they suffer from arthritis.

Arthritis affects all ages, including a significant number of adults in the prime of their lives. While there is a higher prevalence of arthritis in women, it affects one of every two people over age 65. While these numbers are discouraging, the APMA has come up with some foot health care tips for people suffering from arthritis in the foot and ankle. It is important to see a podiatric physician if any of the following symptoms occur in the feet:

- Swelling in one or more joints.
- Recurring pain or tenderness in any joint.
- Redness or heat in a joint.
- Limitation in motion of a joint.
- Early morning stiffness.
- Skin changes, including rashes and growths.

There are several different forms of arthritis; osteoarthritis is the most common. It is a degenerative joint disease which brings on a breakdown in cartilage and pain gets progressively worse. This is a



particular problem for people who are overweight because the additional weight contributes to the deterioration of cartilage and the development of bone spurs.

Early diagnosis is important in effective treatment of arthritis. Destruction of cartilage is not reversible and if the inflammation of arthritic disease isn't treated, both cartilage and bone can be damaged. Most forms of arthritis can be controlled by physical therapy and exercise, accompanied by medication.

A podiatrist, who can diagnose the ailment, and then prescribe medication or another appropriate treatment is the best person to consult with about arthritis in the foot and ankle.

For more information on foot health, visit the APMA's Web site at www.apma.org or call 1-800-FOOTCARE to request a free brochure.