



HEALTH AWARENESS

Healthy Feet Make the Best Dancing Feet *Don't Ignore Foot Pain On The Dance Floor*

(NAPSA)—Being 'light on your feet' when dancing is not entirely true; dancing the night away can take a toll on feet and ankles. Both professional and amateur dancers can suffer foot injuries that can stop the show, as witnessed this season on the popular reality-television show, "Dancing with the Stars."

According to the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons, the most common types of dance-related foot and ankle problems are overuse injuries, which occur due to the repetitive movements in dance. "Over 50 percent of dance injuries occur in the foot and ankle. The severity of the damage is determined by a patient's age, strength and flexibility and the type of shoes worn when dancing," Orlando-area foot and ankle surgeon Amber Shane, DPM, FACFAS, said.

Other common types of injuries related to dancing can include:

- stress fractures (hairline breaks in the bone) from repeated jumping and landing;
- foot neuromas (thickening/irritation of the nerves in the ball of the foot) resulting from repetitive pivoting;
- shin splints (pain and swelling in the front of the lower legs), which can be aggravated by recurring activities;
- tendonitis (inflammation of the tendons in the foot) from over-exertion;
- corns, calluses or blisters—all painful skin irritations resulting from repeated rubbing of the skin on the feet.



More than 50 percent of dance injuries occur in the foot and the ankle. It's important to wear appropriate shoes.

With dancing being repetitively hard on the lower extremities, how can dancers of any level protect their feet and ankles? "The best defense to injury is prevention. Dancers should wear appropriate shoes to properly support their feet and ankles as well as perform dance moves with their individual skill levels in mind," Dr. Shane said.

When an injury does occur, prompt medical attention by a foot and ankle surgeon can make all the difference in a proper rehabilitation. "Most dance injuries can be treated with conservative care as long as they are addressed early and not ignored," Dr. Shane added. "Many people dispel foot pain if they can walk on the foot, but it is important to remember it is possible to walk on a seriously injured foot. Plus, common injuries, if left untreated, may require surgical intervention to ensure proper healing."

For more information on common foot and ankle injuries or to find a foot and ankle surgeon near you, visit FootPhysicians.com.