

Help Your Feet Beat The Wintertime Blues

(NAPSA)—Wintry weather is a great time for children and adults to enjoy popular pastimes such as snowboarding, skiing and skating—if they take care of their feet.

Although these frosty sports are enjoyable and great exercise, they can be brutal on the feet and ankles.

The American Podiatric Association (APMA) offers the following guidelines to protect the feet from icy accidents:

- Properly fitted ski boots and skates are the single most important factor in safe and successful skiing and skating. If boots or skates hurt your feet, visit a podiatric physician who can make recommendations to improve both comfort and performance on the ice or the slopes.

- Always protect your feet by wearing insulated, waterproof boots or shoes.

- Be sure to wear a single pair of thick socks made of acrylic fibers that “wick” away moisture caused by perspiration in the boot.

- Feet soaked in snow should get back indoors quickly. In sub-freezing temperatures, soaked feet are in immediate danger of frostbite. If you begin to feel pain, numbness or tingling in your feet, get out of the cold as soon as possible.

- Cold weather can also increase the incidence of fungal nails: to avoid nail problems, trim toenails



With Jack Frost nipping at your toes, remember to take good care of your feet.

straight across and inspect your feet often.

- Stretch! Stretching helps prevent muscle pulls and tears, and prepares the muscles for the flexing required by the constant forward leaning stress of skiing and skating.

So, before hitting the slopes or heading to the rink, be sure to brush up on these tips and have on the proper footwear. Wintertime activities can be especially harmful and any foot problems should be evaluated and treated by your podiatrist.

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.