



HEALTH AWARENESS

New Options For Baby Boomers With Foot And Ankle Arthritis

(NAPSA)—As they approach retirement, many members of the “Me Generation” aren’t ready to slow down, even if their bodies are. Foot and ankle surgeons say baby boomers are more likely than previous generations to seek care when arthritis develops in their toes, feet and ankles.

“Unlike their parents, baby boomers do not accept foot pain as a natural part of aging,” says John Giurini, DPM, a Boston foot and ankle surgeon and president of the 6,000-member American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons (ACFAS). “When conservative treatments fail, they want to know what other options exist.”

After they’re diagnosed, many boomers hold high expectations for treatment. They may look forward to playing sports again or running. While there is no fountain of youth for a degenerative condition such as arthritis, there are more medical options available than ever before.

The big toe joint is the most common part of the foot to develop osteoarthritis, according to FootPhysicians.com. For boomers with early-stage arthritis in this joint, modern surgical procedures may provide more pain relief and increased joint movement.

Boomers with advanced and severe arthritis may need to have the joint fused or replaced. Stronger screws and hardware are now helping fusions last longer, while slashing recovery times. A



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new generation of big toe joint replacements also shows promise.

Ankles are another prime spot for arthritis. Innovative new surgical techniques allow foot and ankle surgeons to transplant small plugs of cartilage from one part of the ankle to another in some patients, slowing joint deterioration.

Ankle replacements, however, are not as durable as hip and knee replacements. The ankle is a more challenging joint to replace. It’s smaller and moves in multiple directions. But better and promising ankle implants are hitting the market.

For more information on osteoarthritis of the foot and ankle, go to the ACFAS consumer Web site, FootPhysicians.com.