



Editors' Note: A local APMA member podiatrist is available for an interview regarding flip-flop alternatives.

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**AS THE POPULARITY OF FLIP-FLOPS SOARS, PODIATRISTS
STEP IN TO WARN OF THEIR PITFALLS**

Are bare feet a safe alternative to flimsy footwear?

Bethesda, Md. – Consumers across the nation are flipping over this year's flip-flop styles. Their popularity has reached new heights with teenagers and twenty-somethings, and consequently, so has the number of flip-flop related foot injuries. Flip-flops, known for their trendy, simple design and go with any outfit style, might save consumers a few dollars at the register, but only at the expense of the feet.

“Flip-flops offer little in terms of arch support, foot protection and shock absorption. Tendinitis, arch-pain and sprained ankles are just some of the problems flip-flops can cause,” said Dr. Christian Robertozzi, president of the American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA). “Simply put, flip-flops just aren't good for your feet.”

Speaking of no support, another popular trend during the warmer months is going barefoot. Besides the obvious cut, bruise or foreign body getting stuck in the foot, a multitude of more serious injuries can occur.

“Feet are unaccustomed to the lack of support and protection offered by walking or running barefoot. This can lead to plantar fasciitis, stress fractures and transmittable skin conditions,” said Dr. Robertozzi. “Shoes that both support and protect the feet should always be worn in public places, beaches, gyms and at the pool.”

There are many alternatives to going barefoot and to the flimsy support and protection that are inherent to the design of the flip-flop. Varieties of sophisticated summer sandals that combine comfort with latest styles are the perfect alternative. In fact, a recent survey commissioned by the APMA found that 84 percent of women say that comfort is more important than style when selecting shoes.

APMA Seal-holding companies, such as Wolky, Chaco, Dansko and Rockport all feature collections of summer footwear that provide feet not only protection, but also support and style. Each shoe line has been awarded the Seal for meeting the association's high podiatric standards. APMA's Seal program recognizes products that set the benchmark for the footwear and foot care industry. Evaluated by a committee of APMA member podiatrists, these products are shown to allow normal foot function and promote quality foot health. To learn more APMA's Seal program, visit www.apma.org/sealofacceptance.

Summer Footwear Alternatives:



Wolky– By using high-quality, full-grain leathers, Wolky ensures that quality is the focus in everything from creation, engineering, materials and construction. Wolky's Zen, Provence and Ultra Light Collections hold the APMA Seal of Acceptance.



Chaco – By using quality materials that last, Chaco seeks to minimize its environmental impact while providing durable and stylish shoes for men and women. Chaco’s Headwaters, Cross Current, Flipside, and Ándale Collections hold the APMA Seal of Acceptance.



Dansko – By providing state of the art footwear technology, a consumer’s comfort is the company’s first concern. Dansko’s Golden Gate, Beacon Hill, Next Gen, Paddock and Stapled Clogs Collections hold the APMA Seal of Acceptance.



The Rockport Company – Rockport maintains a heritage of engineered comfort and commitment to footwear innovation. Their City Traveler and Tourist Trip Collections hold the APMA Seal of Acceptance.

Founded in 1912, the American Podiatric Medical Association represents the nation’s premier foot and ankle physicians. The Association has component societies in 53 locations in the US and its territories and a membership of close to 11,500 doctors of podiatric medicine. For free foot health information, contact APMA at 1-800-FOOTCARE (1-800-366-8227) or visit www.apma.org on the Web.

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