



# THE NEXT STEP

your first step to a pain-free life



Dr. Andrew Schneider

## Ladies! It's finally here – BOOT SEASON

Houston might as well be known as boot town—between our city's love of all things Rodeo and fashion-forward sensibilities, this favorite form of footwear is seen everywhere. **Here are some tips to keep you on your feet:**



1. Plan ahead: If you know your boots rub you in certain spots (ideally you'd toss them, but realistically you won't, so instead...) cover those areas with Band-Aids or other padding before pulling your kicks on for the day. Choose a strip with some staying power, like Band Aid Tough Strips, or the fix will peel right off and leave you unprotected.
2. Start sprinkling: Part of the reason we get blisters more often in Texas is the humidity: the moisture created by our sweat creates more friction between our feet and shoes. Try sprinkling some cornstarch in your shoes and socks to suck up the moisture and stop the rubbing before problems arise.
3. Stretch: If your boots are rubbing because they are too tight, you can make them bigger. Take them to a pro for some hard-core stretching, or DIY at home by blow-drying some socks, putting them on and then wearing your boots. The heat will from the socks will help expand the leather of the boots (be careful not to get burned on this one!)

Fit should come before fashion when you pick out your boots or other shoes, but I know that's not always the case.

So, What if I have orthotics?

A custom orthotic is designed to balance the foot and ankle. A winter boot is meant to keep the foot and ankle warm. Typically a winter boot lacks structure and support, since warmth alone is its primary function. This is especially true when it comes to those such as the popular Ugg boots. Of course, an orthotic isn't going to provide any warmth to the foot. It's only practical to think that the two should work together well.

You don't have to sacrifice warmth for comfort or vice versa.

Happy Thanksgiving everyone! We are pleased to send you the November issue of *The Next Step*. It is our way of saying that you are important to us and we truly value your business. Please feel free to pass this newsletter on to friends and neighbors. Enjoy!

Here are some of our Favorite Thanksgiving Jokes!

What kind of music did the Pilgrims like? Plymouth Rock

If April showers bring May flowers, what do May flowers bring? Pilgrims

Why was the Thanksgiving soup so expensive? It had 24 carrots.

What happened when the turkey got into a fight? He got the stuffing knocked out of him!

What did the turkey say to the man who tried to shoot it? Liberty, Equality and Bad aim for all.

Who doesn't eat on Thanksgiving? A turkey because it is always stuffed.

Why did the Pilgrims want to sail to America in the spring? Because April showers bring Mayflowers!

source:<http://www.jokes4us.com/holidayjokes/thanksgivingjokes.html>

## Choosing the Right Orthotic

Which is the right insole for us? Is it one that can be found in a drug store or supermarket? One that I saw in a shoe store? How about the guy in the mall who told me I can stand on a platform for a custom fit? Do I need to see a doctor?

Let's start at the bottom. The insoles you will find in a pharmacy are little more than replacement sock-liners for your tennis shoes. They offer little support due to being highly flexible. The gel insoles offer no support, but do offer cushioning for those whose natural fat padding has worn away.

The next level is an insole that you'll find in an athletic shoe store. These often have a plastic, graphite, or rubber shell that, while flexible, does offer support. Who are these right for? Anyone having minor to moderate pain in the heel, Achilles tendon, shin splints, or elsewhere in the foot should notice some improvement. If the pain persists beyond two to four weeks, you should consult a podiatrist. A word of warning: These are generic arch supports that are appropriate for those with "flat feet." If you have a high arch, these insoles may make your pain worse.

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## National Diabetes Month

Diabetes is becoming more and more common, mostly due to the increased overweight population. Many times a podiatrist is the first to diagnose diabetes, due to an issue that arises in the feet. Numbness, a non-healing wound, or chronic infections are all foot issues that are related to diabetes. It is vital that all Diabetics establish a relationship with a podiatrist.

Diabetes is a chronic disease that affects up to 6% of the population. When diabetes is present, either the body produces less or no insulin or the body tissues are resistant to the effects of diabetes. This results in higher levels of glucose in the blood, which can damage a whole range of body tissues and organs.

Care of the feet are essential to diabetics because of the direct effect diabetes has on the feet. Diabetes can damage the nerves, leading to a painful or numb condition called peripheral neuropathy. Diabetes also can lead to poor circulation, which can slow the healing process when damage occurs. Also, diabetics are more prone to infection and are slower to resolve infections due to poor circulation. Because of these issues, diabetics are more prone to such issues such as a completely insensitive foot, foot ulcers, foot deformities due to advanced neuropathy, and persistent infections in the feet. ***The best course of action is to prevent all of these problems from occurring.***

Your Houston Podiatrist has an extremely important role to play in the prevention and management of complications of the foot in those with diabetes. All those who are at risk for a problem should have that risk status assessed at least twice annually, and more if the risk is greater. Your podiatrist should communicate this risk status to other members of the health care team. Advice should be given on how to reduce the chance of damage happening, what to do to prevent it and what to do if something does go wrong.

Regular foot care from a podiatrist is a key way to prevent problems from developing in those who are at risk. Diabetic shoes and insoles are another way to manage pressures beneath the feet that could become ulcers.

When something does go wrong, call our office immediately. Waiting a "few days to see what happens" before seeing someone may be the difference between a good and poor outcome. The sooner treatment is started the better. If you are diabetic and think you have a problem, call now for an immediate appointment.

### 3 Minute Lifesaving Exam!

When you find out that you have diabetes, I'm sure a million different things start running through your head: everything is going to change... I'll have to spend so much time on medical procedures... what will I be able to eat... will I lose my feet?

Hearing you have any illness is scary, but I'm here to tell you that managing your diabetic foot health doesn't have to be scary—or time consuming!

Part of making sure your feet stay healthy is maintaining regular visits with your podiatrist, but that doesn't mean you'll spend your entire life in a doctor's office: quite the opposite.

Simply by following the American Podiatric Medical Association guidelines (APMA), your doctor can conduct a thorough (and lifesaving!) foot exam in just three minutes!

Here's the breakdown:

Minute 1: We'll discuss your medical history, including questions about symptoms (do your feet tingle or burn?), do you have any leg pain or have you had any wounds or ulcers in the past?

Minute 2: During these 60 seconds, your doctor will examine your skin, your neurologic reflexes, your bone structure and your vascular health. Yes, a one minute exam can reveal a fairly complete picture of your diabetic foot health!

Minute 3: In the last minute of your exam, your doctor will discuss with you steps you can take at home—like always wearing well-fitted shoes and performing daily foot inspections—that will drastically decrease your risk of experiencing complications.

I know we can all spare at least three minutes to save our feet—and our lives! Of course, when you schedule a diabetic consultation, I have much more time to spend with you—but even if you can only give me 180 seconds, I can help you take great strides towards protecting your feet!



### Choosing the Right Orthotic, (Continued)

Then there are the "experts" at shoe stores and mall kiosks who pull out all of the bells and whistles with a seemingly high-tech computer force plate to measure the pressures beneath the foot. Don't waste your money! First of all, a static footprint tells very little about how the foot functions when walking. Second, before you drop lots of money on something custom, be sure that the person has a degree and not just bought into a franchise.

I'm not telling you that everyone needs a custom orthotics. I do feel that if you are suffering with foot pain to the point where you need to find a fast solution, visiting a podiatrist will ultimately provide you the most comprehensive evaluation and will work to develop a complete plan for eliminating your pain. A custom orthotic is much more than simply an arch support; it is a device formulated to balance your feet, and entire lower extremity, to allow them to function most optimally.

If you have trouble seeing when you drive, you wouldn't solve it by buying a pair of one dollar reading glasses in the pharmacy, right? Would you want any less for your foot pain?



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You can sign up on our website: [www.tanglewoodfootspecialists.com](http://www.tanglewoodfootspecialists.com)



### **From the desk of Dr. Andrew Schneider:**

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