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Podiatrist

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SOLE MATE: I did my undergrad at Lehigh University. I knew that I was going to enter the medical profession but wasn't certain what area. I looked at many options and really liked the variety of issues surrounding the foot. As a podiatrist, I get to see the very young, the elderly and everyone in between, which is nice. I graduated from Temple University School of Podiatric Medicine in 2001, which has a four-year medical program that concentrates specifically on the foot and ankle. In 2003, I joined Taylor and Osterman in D.C., and I've opened my own practice in Sterling.

DOGS BARKING?: Comfort is the most important element when shopping for a pair of shoes. While I don't wear Jimmy Choos myself, I know that plenty of women do. Everything in moderation is my motto. So if you do wear stilettos, I recommend not wearing them for the full day. Either bring them to work and change into them for the evening or wear them to work and bring some sneakers to walk home in.

LIVING ON THE WEDGE: I really like the wedge heels that are in right now. They are comfortable and trendy, plus the thicker heel allows for better balance. Materials like terry cloth, soft leather and mesh fabrics are great for letting your feet breathe. Always shop for shoes in the late afternoon or evening because feet tend to swell. If you buy them prior to being on your feet for an extended period of time, they may be too small or too tight. And you shouldn't necessarily rely on the size of your last pair of shoes. Different brands vary, and your feet actually get larger and wider over time, so take the time to get your foot measured.

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SPA TREATMENT: When you head to the pedicurist, don't have your cuticles cut or pushed back. Doing so removes a protective barrier, which makes it easier for bacteria and viruses to infect your toenails. People who have regular pedicures should consider investing in their own instruments to bring to the spa. That's really the only way to ensure that they're clean. And don't forget to moisturize your feet -- that, along with the pumice stone, helps to keep away the dreaded calluses. Certain creams also can help with callus buildup. Look for creams with urea, which acts as an exfoliant to help break down calluses.

ARCH ENEMIES: I see lots of ingrown toenails, warts, hammertoes, calluses and bunions. One of the more typical and often untreated conditions is when toenails have fungi problems, which result in a yellow and thickened toenail. Oral and topical treatments can help this condition, but it also takes a good six months before you see true results, and the treatments don't work for everyone.

AGONY OF DE-FEET: Bromhidrosis is the term used to describe smelly feet. Closed shoes aggravate sweaty feet and set up the perfect environment for bacteria to grow, which makes the smell worse. Products like Gordon Laboratories Bromi-Lotion, available from your podiatrist, can decrease the problem. Also, changing your shoes

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daily lets each pair dry between wearings, and some patients find that changing their socks midday and using powder on their toes helps control the sweating.

As told to Karen Hart

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