

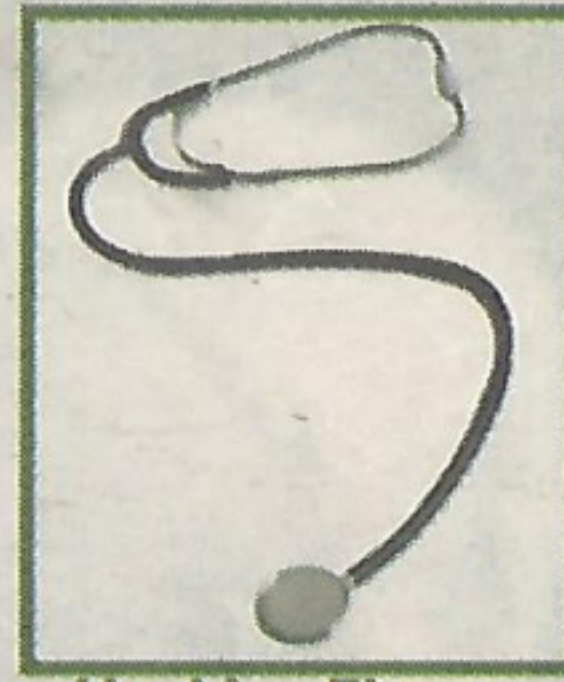
# Make your feet happy during graduation/prom season

By Ujjwal K. Datta, D.P.M., FACFAS

**N**ow that old man winter is finally ready to give way to the tulips going into bloom heralding spring and summer, young women (and men) get set to graduate from schools and colleges and attend proms. This, of course, involves getting dressed to impress and groomed to look their very best, including the shoes they purchase. For the ladies, it's important to make the right decision when purchasing shoes for these momentous occasions, as well as everyday life, to avoid pain and poten-

tial problems with their feet.

The majority of women prefer to wear high-heeled shoes while going out for any formal event or for a night out with friends and family. Unfortunately high-heeled shoes can cause pain, deformities and damage to the feet that can remain problematic for years to come. To prevent this from happening, try to avoid shoes that are narrow and pointy in the front. Selecting shoes with heels less than two inches can also go a long way in re-



Health & Fitness

ducing foot pain. High-heeled shoes transfer excessive pressure to the forefoot, which can disrupt the body's alignment and can lead to conditions such as bunions, hammertoes, corns and calluses, neuromas, Haglund's deformity (aka "pump bump"), ankle sprains, and back pain from chronic use. High heels can also cause instability while walking on uneven and/or slippery sur-

faces, leading to falls, which can cause sprains, strains and fractures of the foot and ankle.

If a heel higher than two inches is a must, make sure that the heel of the shoe sits more or less directly under the heel counter (where the heel of your foot would sit inside the shoe) and not the an-

terior (front) of it. That way center of gravity will not be violated. Also, make sure you have enough room in the toe box and ensure that the shoe is appropriate in width. And keep in mind that it is best to buy any shoes at the end of the day to allow for natural swelling to be a factor while choosing the appropriate width of the shoe.

Have a happy prom/graduation season and remember, healthy feet are happy feet and happy feet make happier people!

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