Stay on the Move at ACFAS 2015: Download Free Mobile App

ACFAS 2015 is once again going mobile to keep you moving! Before you head to Phoenix for the Annual Scientific Conference, be sure to download the free ACFAS 2015 Mobile App to your iPhone, iPad or Android to instantly:

- Keep track of your pre-selected sessions;
- Review all conference events and activities;
- Receive up-to-the-minute conference alerts;
- Read the latest conference news on Twitter and Facebook feeds;
- Navigate your way around the convention center with convenient maps;
- Find the vendors you don’t want to miss.

The ACFAS 2015 mobile app will be available for download in early February through one of three ways:

2. Search your app store for ACFAS 2015 (iOS and Android).
3. Visit acfas.org/phoenix for a link.

Once you’ve downloaded your app, you’ll be able to populate it with your personal schedule and contact information by entering your login credentials, which will be sent to you before the conference via email and will be available on the back of your badge at ACFAS 2015.

Watch your ACFAS newsletters and inbox for further details and download reminders on going mobile in Phoenix!
I have had many an evening meal with international colleagues discussing the “political” aspects of foot and ankle surgery in the U.S. Through these discussions, I have realized three things:

- First, although our degree may seem foreign to some, our training and education define who we are: Podiatric physicians by degree, but foot and ankle surgeons by post-graduate education and formal surgical training;

- Second, many great ACFAS members paved the way in these countries for other members and me to be readily accepted; and

- Finally, ACFAS’ reputation, especially in regards to our surgical skills courses and the Journal of Foot & Ankle Surgery, is known and respected worldwide.

Unfortunately, problems arise when foot and ankle surgeons represent themselves to the world, or worse, their patients, as something they are not. The dictionary defines a poseur as someone who pretends to be what he or she is not. Poseurs tend to suffer from a dangerous combination of arrogance and laziness. They are arrogant because they will not admit what they do not know how to do or simply cannot do; and they are lazy because they will not put in the necessary effort to learn what is needed to properly perform what they pretend to do.

This behavior becomes increasingly dangerous when applied to patient care. There are poseurs who thoroughly counsel patients on procedures that they themselves do not actually perform or have little knowledge of, as opposed to referring these patients for proper management of their health needs. The Hippocratic Corpus states the physician has two duties, namely “...to do good or to do no harm.” Understanding your limitations as a provider protects patients by doing no harm, and referring patients to an appropriate provider benefits them by affording access to necessary care. This is true patient-centric care.

The backbone of ACFAS is dissemination of our collective educational wisdom for the betterment of our patients. This is crystal clear from review of the first recorded objectives of the College: “To promote the art and science of foot surgery; to disseminate among its members, and the profession in general, all knowledge of foot surgery; to educate the public and students about foot surgery; and to encourage and maintain the highest professional standards among its members as they constantly strive to develop advanced techniques in foot surgery.” This purpose is devoid of arrogance and intolerant of laziness.

In context, I have always proposed that if you did not get the training in your residency/fellowship, or do not have sufficient clinical experience with a procedure, then you should enhance your skill set using any of the College’s many resources—be it in print, online or in-person. The strongest link in this education milieu is you, the ACFAS member. Interact with young members, be involved in your Regional Division, volunteer for a committee or sign up to peer review for the Journal of Foot & Ankle Surgery. I challenge you to give back to the College through sharing the legacy of learning that members of the College shared with you along your educational pathway.

I firmly believe that collectively we are a network of like-minded and authentic foot and ankle surgeons interested in one goal: bettering our patients’ lives in meaningful ways. To do this, we should not excuse or accept poseur behavior when we see it. Instead, we should remember to always represent all foot and ankle surgeons well by adhering to the highest standards of conduct as promoted by ACFAS as we are all judged by the actions and decorum of our members.

Thomas S. Roukis, DPM, PhD, FACFAS
ACFAS President
Follow the Latest #ACFAS2015 Buzz on Social Media

Looking for ways to keep up with the latest buzz at ACFAS 2015? Not able to join us in Phoenix? Follow moment-by-moment updates and photos from the conference at #ACFAS2015 on Twitter and Facebook or through the social media feeds on the conference’s mobile app, downloadable at http://m.core-apps.com/acfas2015.

2015 EDUCATION PROGRAMS

February 18, 2015 (Wednesday)
Perfecting Your Practice: Practice Management/Coding Workshop
Phoenix Convention Center
Phoenix, AZ

February 18, 2015 (Wednesday)
Diabetic Deformity: Master Techniques in Reconstruction
Phoenix Convention Center
Phoenix, AZ

February 18, 2015 (Wednesday)
Master Surgical Techniques: Fine-Tuning with the Experts
Phoenix Convention Center
Phoenix, AZ

February 19-22, 2015 (Thursday–Sunday)
2015 Annual Scientific Conference
Phoenix Convention Center
Phoenix, AZ

April 17-18, 2015 (Friday/Saturday)
Advanced Forefoot Reconstruction and Complications Workshop and Seminar
Buffalo Marriott Niagara
Buffalo, NY

April 18-19, 2015 (Saturday/Sunday)
Total Ankle Arthroplasty Registration Application online
Science Care Lab
Denver, CO

May 1-2, 2015 (Friday/Saturday)
Advanced Forefoot Reconstruction and Complications Workshop and Seminar
Sheraton Harborside Portsmouth Hotel
Portsmouth, NH

May 2-3, 2015 (Saturday/Sunday)
Foot and Ankle Arthroscopy
Orthopaedic Learning Center
Chicago, IL

June 19-20, 2015 (Friday/Saturday)
Foot and Ankle Arthroscopy
Orthopaedic Learning Center
Chicago, IL

August 1-2, 2015 (Saturday/Sunday)
Foot and Ankle Arthroscopy
Orthopaedic Learning Center
Chicago, IL

October 17-18, 2015 (Saturday/Sunday)
Comprehensive Flatfoot (Reconstruction & Arthrodesis)
Mobile Lab
Location TBD

November 7-8, 2015 (Saturday/Sunday)
Advanced Arthroscopy for Foot and Ankle
Orthopaedic Learning Center
Chicago, IL

December 12-13, 2015 (Saturday/Sunday)
Foot and Ankle Arthroscopy
Orthopaedic Learning Center
Chicago, IL

*To be waitlisted, contact Maggie Hjelm at hjelm@acfas.org.

For a full listing of upcoming educational opportunities, visit acfas.org/education.
While you come to the ACFAS Annual Scientific Conference for the educational and networking opportunities, top off your conference experience with ACFAS’ signature special events! From the Premier Connection—Opening Event, the Resident and Student Networking gathering, the ACFAS Honors and Awards Ceremony, numerous satellite events, to the always-fun Wrap Party at Chase Field—there’s constantly something going on to make everyone’s conference the best it can be!

To welcome you to Phoenix and ACFAS 2015, we’re taking the opening event, the Premier Connection, to the streets this year! Head outdoors on Thursday night for free-flow networking with classmates, colleagues and new friends, all while enjoying delicious food, beverages and live music in the heart of downtown Phoenix.

If you’re a resident or student, you’ll want to stop by the invitation-only Resident and Student Networking event on your way to the Premier Connection to meet your new professional peers and ACFAS Board members. Don’t miss the opportunity to gain career advice and grow your network while enjoying refreshments and the company of your colleagues, plus you even have the chance to win great prizes just for attending!

Show your support for your fellow colleagues during the annual ACFAS Honors and Awards Ceremony on February 20. Be among the first to congratulate Manuscript, Poster, Honor and Merit Award winners; see new Fellows receive their College pins; and welcome the 2015–2016 Board of Directors at this esteemed event.

Early on, be sure to also check out the profession’s largest scientific poster display featuring more than 250 award-winning research studies from around the world. Poster authors will be available from 1–2pm each day on Thursday and Friday to answer your questions and share their insights.

Also plan to attend our industry-sponsored satellite events, including breakfasts courtesy of DePuy Synthes, Amniox Medical and OrthoSolutions held at the convention center (check the final program for listings), a Forefoot Innovations Showcase sponsored by Nextraity Solutions and an after-hours gathering by Zimmer at the Sheraton on Friday evening.

Cap off your stay in Phoenix with a family-friendly Wrap Party at Chase Field on the last night of the conference. Mix and mingle in the home of the 2001 World Series, tour the clubhouse, view the World Series trophy, play baseball-themed games and munch on tasty fare. Tickets are available for purchase for $40 per person at the time of your registration. Fun shuttle transportation will depart from the Sheraton starting at 6pm.

Expanding your ACFAS 2015 experience beyond the ordinary is easy when so many exciting events await you—we look forward to seeing you in Phoenix!
ACFAS 2015 Special Events

Thursday, February 19
6:15–7:30 pm
The Premier Connection Opening Event: Takin’ It to the Streets!
(3rd Street, Between West and North Buildings)
1–2 pm
Meet Scientific Poster Authors
(Exhibit Hall)
5:15–6:15 pm
Resident & Student Networking (by invitation only)
(North Hall AB Foyer)
7:30 pm
Nextremity Solutions, Inc. Forefoot Innovations Showcase
(Renaissance by Marriott Downtown Phoenix Havasupai Room)
An interactive reception to experience hands-on demonstrations with guided instruction from product and clinical experts.

Friday, February 20
6:30–7:30 am
DePuy Synthes, Inc. Breakfast Satellite
Advanced Calcaneal Fracture Fixation Techniques and New Solutions
6:30–7:30 am
Amniox Medical Breakfast Satellite
Orchestrating Regenerative Healing: Umbilical Cord and Amniotic Membrane Transplantation for Foot and Ankle Surgery
6:15 pm
ACFAS Honors & Awards Ceremony
(North Hall AB Foyer)
Congratulations to our winners:
ACFAS Manuscript Award
ACFAS Poster Award
ACFAS Honor Award
ACFAS Merit Award
6:00 pm–6:15 pm
Registration/Hors d’oeuvres
6:15–7:45 pm
Presentations:
Stephen A. Brigido, DPM, FACFAS
Lawrence A. DiDomenico, DPM, FACFAS
Alan Ng, DPM, FACFAS

Saturday, February 21
6:30–7:30 am
DePuy Synthes, Inc. Breakfast Satellite
Surgical Solutions for Challenging Charcot Foot Cases
Patrick R. Burns, DPM
6:30 pm–7:30 am
OrthoSolutions Breakfast Satellite
Interphalangeal Arthrodesis with a Radiolucent Intramedullary Implant (ToeGrip®)
Edward Lebrija, DPM, FACFAS
Patrice Diebold, PhD, MD
6:30 pm
Take Me Out to the Ballpark! Wrap Party at Chase Field
Join your colleagues for a memorable night as you mix and mingle in the home of the 2001 World Series in the heart of Downtown Phoenix! Upon arrival, guests can take a tour of the clubhouse, get a glimpse of the World Series trophy, play baseball-themed games, and nosh on delicious fare! Families invited. Shuttles depart from the Sheraton beginning at 6pm. Tickets are $40 per person. Badges and tickets required for entry.
Ready for ACFAS 2015 in Phoenix? As you count down the days until the main event, follow these tips to guarantee your conference experience is nothing less than spectacular.

**Download the ACFAS 2015 mobile app.** Access your customized conference schedule, up-to-the-minute details, maps, vendor lists and more through your personal handheld device. To download the app,
1. Type http://m.core-apps.com/acfas2015 on your mobile phone’s Web browser,
2. Search your app store for ACFAS 2015 (iOS and Android) or 3. Visit acfas.org/phoenix for a link. Once you’ve downloaded your app, watch for an email from ACFAS with your login credentials to gain access to your personalized schedule. Once at the conference, you can also see the back of your badge for your login information.

**Check Phoenix’s forecast and pack accordingly.** Warm temps and plenty of sunshine are expected, but Mother Nature isn’t always this predictable.

Bring a sweater or jacket. Rooms in the convention center will be kept cool, so dress in layers to stay comfortable.

**Head to the conference registration area as early as possible.** Sign in, pick up your materials and dive right into ACFAS 2015.

**Wear your badge.** Your conference badge must be worn at all times for security purposes and is required for attendance at sessions, meetings, receptions and Exhibit Hall events.

**Follow #ACFAS 2015 on social media.** Use #ACFAS2015 in your Twitter and Facebook posts and to search social media for what others are sharing about the conference. The #ACFAS2015 feed will also appear in the mobile app so you don’t miss the latest happenings.

**Attend special events.** Catch up with friends and meet new ones at the Premier Connection—Opening Event, support your colleagues at the ACFAS Honors and Awards Ceremony and get a behind-the-scenes look at Chase Field—home of the 2001 World Series—during the Wrap Party.

Also make time for our industry-sponsored satellite events, including breakfasts courtesy of DePuy Synthes, Amniox Medical and OrthoSolutions held at the convention center (check the final program for listings), a Forefoot Innovations Showcase sponsored by Nextremity Solutions and an after-hours gathering by Zimmer.

**Explore the Exhibit Hall.** Hang at the HUB (sponsored by PICA), chat with exhibitors, look for a new position or potential candidates at the ACFAS Job Fair (sponsored by PodiatryCareers.org) or have your headshot taken by a professional photographer for your resume and social media profiles.

**Complete your post-conference evaluation.** We value your feedback, so please share your thoughts via the app or the printed evaluations available at the conference.
The Great Job Hunt: Find or Fill a Job at ACFAS 2015

Looking for a new job or a new hire for your practice? Make plans to stop by the second annual Job Fair at ACFAS 2015.

Located in the Exhibit Hall, and sponsored once again by ACFAS Benefit Partner PodiatryCareers.org, the Job Fair will connect jobseekers and employers by allowing each to post resumes and open positions and arrange potential interviews onsite using PodiatryCareers.org’s convenient online scheduling tool. A confidential interview room will also be available onsite for use.

Plus, back by popular demand—Headshot Photos! A photographer and make-up artist will once again be available in the Exhibit Hall to take free professional headshots for you to include with your resumes and in your social media profiles.

Don’t worry if you can’t make it to ACFAS 2015—all positions and resumes for the Job Fair will be posted to PodiatryCareers.org in advance of the conference. Plus, ACFAS members receive reduced rates on online job postings and can post their available positions on the Job Fair bulletin boards at no cost.

Make this year your new start—stop by the Job Fair and Headshot booth in Phoenix and jumpstart your career—ACFAS style!

Find Out What’s Happening in Your Area

Attend Your ACFAS Regional Division Meetings in Phoenix

Attend your Regional Division’s meeting to hear about the most recent happenings and upcoming activities of your local Division, meet the officers and network with ACFAS members who are practicing in your part of the country.

All ACFAS Members who attend their Division’s meeting will be placed in a drawing to receive one of two Apple iPad minis—don’t miss it!

See below the schedule of Regional Division meetings being held during ACFAS 2015 in the Exhibit Hall. Look for your Division’s table sign:

**Thursday, February 19**
1–2pm
Division 8: New England
Division 9: Greater New York
Division 10: Upstate New York
Division 11: Mid-Atlantic

**Saturday, February 21**
1–2pm
Division 1: Pacific
Division 12: Tri-State
Division 13: Ohio Valley

**Friday, February 20**
1–2pm
Division 3: Southwest
Division 4: Desert States
Division 5: Florida
Division 6: Midwest

**Saturday, February 21**
Noon–1pm
Division 2: Northwest/Canada
Division 7: Michigan
Division 14: Southeast
The coming year will be one of the most challenging in the history of medical practice management. The transition to ICD-10 will bring an explosion of new codes, and the federal Electronic Health Record (EHR) Incentive Program will begin to impose financial penalties in 2015 on practices that do not attest to meaningful use of an EHR. Cuts to Medicare reimbursements under the Physician Quality Reporting System and Value-Based Modifier also begin in 2015. Plus, the recent rise in Medicare auditing of billing claims is likely to continue—a reality made more difficult for podiatric surgical practices by the introduction of new surgical modifiers.

Simply put, physicians and their practice managers are facing a mountain of new challenges. With that in mind, the ACFAS Perfecting Your Practice: Practice Management/Coding Workshop, is poised to provide you and your staff with the tools and training you need to navigate the coming year.

The Practice Management/Coding Workshop is once again being offered as a pre-course at ACFAS 2015, providing an in-depth look at the key areas of billing, coding and compliance required to manage today’s medical practice. Rated as one of the College’s top courses, the seminar will focus on surgical coding, modifiers, evaluation and management codes, durable medical equipment, meaningful use attestation and more.

Summer and fall programs are also in the works, and in these, ACFAS is working to recalibrate the format in response to member feedback. Specifically, a second surgical coding expert, Troy Boffeli, DPM, FACFAS, is being added to the faculty to increase the opportunity for audience participation in coding scenario training. Boffeli joins returning faculty members Jerome S. Noll, DPM, FACFAS, and ACFAS Coding Consultant Jacqueline Reiss-Kravitz, CPC.

“Our goal in revamping the program is to make it more interactive and to dedicate substantially more time to reviewing coding scenarios from diagnosis, through procedural coding, to billing. The feedback from participants at previous workshops has always been very positive, but it also consistently demonstrated a desire for more interactive training. We’re zeroing in on that this year,” says Dr. Noll, chair of the ACFAS Practice Management Committee.

The additional dates for the workshops are July 17-18 and October 16-17. For more information on the program or to register for the pre-conference at ACFAS 2015, visit acfas.org/practicemanagement.

Spring is the perfect time to refresh your surgical skills and acquire new ones—start with ACFAS’ latest surgical skills course, Total Ankle Arthroplasty. This hands-on workshop, set for April 18-19, 2015 in Denver, is now accepting applications to register.

If you’re ABFAS-certified in foot and ankle or reconstructive/rearfoot ankle and you meet the course prerequisites, you can look forward to an entire weekend devoted to performing primary implantation and revision implants of FDA-approved ankle replacement systems. Throughout the course, expert faculty will share their experiences and surgical decision-making process while demonstrating cutting-edge techniques that will help boost your confidence in the OR and improve patient outcomes.

You’ll learn how total ankle arthroplasty is used to manage degenerative, post-traumatic and systemic ankle arthritis as well as how to recognize indications for total ankle arthroscopy vs. ankle fusion. Patient indications are discussed through case studies, and faculty members will also review conservative management, complications of total ankle arthroplasty and the role of supplementary procedures.

Program includes cadaver lab. Online registration is not available for this course, so visit acfas.org/education for an application to register.
Lawrence A. DiDomenico to Receive 2015 ACFAS Distinguished Service Award

Lawrence A. DiDomenico, DPM, FACFAS, is the recipient of the 2015 ACFAS Distinguished Service Award, one of the College’s highest honors. The ACFAS Board of Directors presents this prestigious award each year at the Annual Scientific conference to recognize those members who volunteer their time, expertise and service behind the scenes to advance the College’s mission. Dr. DiDomenico is the twelfth recipient of this distinguished honor.

“When I first learned that I was to receive this award, I was at a loss for words,” he says. “I’m honored, humbled and excited to receive such a distinguished decoration and to be included among this esteemed group of previous winners.”

Dr. DiDomenico’s volunteer efforts began years ago at the advice of several mentors. “By meeting colleagues from throughout the country and around the world, I developed many fantastic relationships, strong bonds and a sense of partnership with my good friends and colleagues as the driving force,” he says.

These connections are what Dr. DiDomenico values most about his experience as a volunteer, and he is also grateful for the opportunity to both learn and educate. “Throughout my time as an ACFAS member, I have learned from the many successful colleagues who have touched my life and career along the way, and this in turn has helped me become a successful foot and ankle surgeon,” says Dr. DiDomenico. “I hope I have inspired other colleagues in their careers as previous colleagues have inspired me. I feel I have a responsibility to provide the same level of mentorship and education,” he adds.

For new ACFAS members who would like to become more involved with the College, Dr. DiDomenico advises them to take advantage of the educational opportunities the College provides. “Education is the key to success in foot and ankle surgery, and ACFAS offers so many avenues to enhance and develop your skills while providing a central stage to forge new, lifelong, supportive relationships with members,” he says.

ACFAS congratulates Dr. DiDomenico on this honor and thanks him for his dedicated service to the College.

“I hope I have inspired other colleagues in their careers as previous colleagues have inspired me. I feel I have a responsibility to provide the same level of mentorship and education.” — Lawrence A. DiDomenico, DPM, FACFAS
New Board Members Elected

Congratulations to these newly elected ACFAS board members from the recent election:

- Christopher F. Hyer, DPM, FACFAS (three-year term)
- Scott C. Nelson, DPM, FACFAS (three-year term)
- Randal Wraalstad, DPM, FACFAS (one-year term)

Also serving on the 2015–2016 Board of Directors are Richard Derner, DPM, FACFAS, President; Sean T. Grambart, DPM, FACFAS, President-Elect; Laurence G. Rubin, DPM, FACFAS, Secretary-Treasurer; Thomas S. Roukis, DPM, PhD, FACFAS, Immediate Past President; Byron L. Hutchinson, DPM, FACFAS; Aksone Nouvong, DPM, FACFAS; Christopher Reeves, DPM, FACFAS; and John S. Steinberg, DPM, FACFAS.

The new board will be installed at the Honors and Awards Ceremony on February 20 during the Annual Scientific Conference in Phoenix.

A Big Thank You to Our ACFAS 2014 Volunteer Leaders!

The College gratefully recognizes members who have devoted their time and expertise to ACFAS 2014–2015 committees and task forces. Thank you also to those who served in the past year as peer reviewers and section editors for the Journal of Foot & Ankle Surgery. Their names have been published in JFAS and can be viewed at acfas.org/jfas:

Bradley P. Abicht, DPM, AACFAS
Michael T. Ambroziak, DPM, FACFAS
Joseph M. Anain, Jr., DPM, FACFAS
John J. Anderson, DPM, FACFAS
David J. Aungst, DPM, FACFAS
Jeffrey R. Baker, DPM, FACFAS
Richard E. Baker, Jr., DPM, FACFAS
Joanne N. Balkaran, DPM, FACFAS
Eric A. Barp, DPM, FACFAS
James R. Bender, DPM, FACFAS
Nicholas J. Bevilacqua, DPM, FACFAS
Troy J. Boffeli, DPM, FACFAS
Georganne Botek, DPM, FACFAS
Blake Brannick
Craig J. Breslauer, DPM, FACFAS
William C. Burmeister, DPM
Michelle L. Butterworth, DPM, FACFAS
Danielle N. Butto, DPM
James P. Callahan, DPM
Russell M. Carlson, DPM, AACFAS
Gregory D. Catalano, DPM, FACFAS
Luke D. Cicchinelli, DPM, FACFAS
James T. Clancy, DPM, FACFAS
Emily A. Cook, DPM, MPH, FACFAS
Keith D. Cook, DPM, FACFAS
Stephen V. Corey, DPM, FACFAS
Michael J. Cornelison, DPM, FACFAS
Charles W. Craft, DPM, FACFAS
Paul D. Dayton, DPM, MS, FACFAS
Randall L. Dei, DPM, FACFAS

Jason George DeVries, DPM, FACFAS
Thanh L. Dinh, DPM, FACFAS
Mark D. Dollard, DPM, FACFAS
Michael S. Downey, DPM, FACFAS
Robert J. Duggan, DPM, FACFAS
Michael D. Dujela, DPM, FACFAS
Katherine E. Dux, DPM, FACFAS
John N. Evans, DPM, FACFAS
Raef M. Fahmy, DPM, FACFAS
Corey M. Fidler, DPM
Adam E. Fleischer, DPM, MPH, FACFAS
Timothy C. Ford, DPM, FACFAS
Raymond A. Fritz, Jr., DPM, FACFAS
Alan S. Goldenhar, DPM, FACFAS
Eoin P. Gorman, DPM
Jordan P. Grossman, DPM, FACFAS
Nathaniel A. Hamm, DPM
Mark A. Hardy, DPM, FACFAS
Matthew D. Hinderland, DPM, FACFAS
Matthew A. Hopson, DPM, FACFAS
Allen M. Jacobs, DPM, FACFAS
Brandi M. Johnson, DPM, FACFAS
Robert M. Joseph, DPM, PhD, FACFAS
Daniel C. Jupiter, PhD
Lisbeth Marie Keplinger, DPM, FACFAS
Bobby M. Kuruvilla, DPM, FACFAS
Thomas M. Landino, DPM, FACFAS
Adam S. Landsman, DPM, PhD, FACFAS
Daniel K. Lee, DPM, PhD, FACFAS
Michael S. Lee, DPM, FACFAS
Gary M. Lepow, DPM, FACFAS
George T. Liu, DPM, FACFAS
Jose P. Loor, DPM, ACFAS
Christopher D. Lotufo, DPM, FACFAS
Alan A. MacGill, DPM, FACFAS
John T. Marcoux, DPM, FACFAS
Mark C. Margiotta, DPM, FACFAS
Derrick J. McKay, DPM
Robert W. Mendicino, DPM, FACFAS
Joseph J. Menn, DPM, FACFAS
Andrew J. Meyr, DPM, FACFAS
J. Michael Miller, DPM, FACFAS
Jason R. Miller, DPM, FACFAS
Roya Mirmiran, DPM, FACFAS
L. Jolene Moyer, DPM, FACFAS
Vincent J. Muscarella, DPM, FACFAS
Samuel Nava, Jr., DPM, FACFAS
Cristian Neagu, DPM, FACFAS
Scott C. Nelson, DPM, FACFAS
Jerome S. Noll, DPM, FACFAS
James A. Noriega, DPM, FACFAS
Aksone Nouvong, DPM, FACFAS
Benjy L. Olsen, DPM, FACFAS
Julio C. Ortiz, DPM, FACFAS
Jeffrey A. Oster, DPM, FACFAS
Benjamin D. Overley, Jr., DPM, FACFAS
Bela A. Pandit, DPM, FACFAS
Kyle S. Peterson, DPM, ACFAS
Melvin B. Price, DPM, FACFAS
Mark A. Prissel, DPM, ACFAS
Barry I. Rosenblum, DPM, FACFAS
Thomas S. Roukis, DPM, PhD, FACFAS
Shannon M. Rush, DPM, FACFAS
Brett D. Sachs, DPM, FACFAS
James C. Sang, DPM, FACFAS
Valerie L. Schade, DPM, FACFAS
Harry P. Schneider, DPM, FACFAS
Stephen M. Schroeder, DPM, FACFAS
Monica H. Schweinberger, DPM, ACFAS
Ryan T. Scott, DPM, FACFAS
Bruce A. Scudday, DPM, FACFAS
Amber M. Shane, DPM, FACFAS
Jonathan J. Sharpe, DPM, FACFAS
Naohiro Shibuya, DPM, MS, FACFAS
Stephen H. Silvani, DPM, FACFAS
Matthew D. Sorensen, DPM, FACFAS
Gregory P. Still, DPM, FACFAS
Wenjay Sung, DPM, FACFAS
Timothy D. Swartz, DPM, FACFAS
James L. Thomas, DPM, FACFAS
Michael D. Vaardahl, DPM, FACFAS
Harold W. Vogler, DPM, FACFAS
Eric G. Walter, DPM, FACFAS
Stephen C. Wan, DPM, FACFAS
Glenn M. Weinraub, DPM, FACFAS
Stuart J. Wertheimer, DPM, FACFAS
Julie A. Wieger, DPM, FACFAS
Randal L. Wraalstad, DPM, FACFAS
Allen Jacobs, DPM, FACFAS, never set out to become an expert witness, but after he was first asked to review a malpractice plaintiff case in the early 1980s—and then subsequently heard the defendant’s testimony in court—he knew that serving as an expert witness was a path he was meant to take.

In this particular case, an individual with severe vascular disease was scheduled to undergo surgery for a bunion, lesser metatarsal osteotomies and multiple hammertoes. The co-admitting physician wrote a progress note asking the podiatrist to reconsider performing the surgery until the patient’s poor vascular status was evaluated. However, the podiatrist proceeded to perform multiple procedures, and the patient developed gangrene requiring amputation. When, in his deposition, the podiatrist was asked why he proceeded with surgery given the patient’s vascular disease, the podiatrist’s response floored Dr. Jacobs.

“The podiatrist stated, under oath, that if the patient’s circulation was poor, it was the primary care physician’s responsibility to cancel the case. He also stated, under oath, that it wasn’t a podiatrist’s responsibility to evaluate circulation,” explains Dr. Jacobs.

Since that time, attorneys have contacted Dr. Jacobs for plaintiff and defense review, which has given him a behind-the-scenes look at both sides of the legal process, but serving as an expert witness, especially in podiatry defense, does not come without its own unique challenges, particularly the disconnect that can exist between non-podiatric physicians and podiatric physicians in the evaluation and treatment of foot pathology.

However, educating non-podiatric physicians and other healthcare providers about the depth and breadth of foot pathology, diagnosis and treatment can help non-podiatrists “realize that many of these problems are multifactorial and more complex than they had envisioned, thus requiring expertise of someone with experience in treating foot and ankle pathology,” he says.

For those in the foot and ankle surgery profession who would like to serve as an expert witness, Dr. Jacobs’ advice is simple: always do what you believe in your heart is the correct thing to do. He also advises not to take any case, defense or plaintiff, just for the money. “Always be truthful and recognize available diagnostic and therapeutic options. If your experience, medical practice or commonality of practice supports these options, accept these alternatives as reasonable,” he recommends.

“Read and reread the records to understand them and also understand the standard(s) of care,” he adds. “Review updated medical literature, not just one textbook, and consider all circumstances—clinical, social, economic and compliance.”

For those searching for a reputable expert witness from the foot and ankle surgery profession, Dr. Jacobs says that among the many factors involved in expert witness selection, a qualified candidate should be able to effectively articulate a plaintiff or defense position to a jury or to attorneys in a deposition. “Remember, no matter how prestigious an individual may appear to you, if s/he does not work tirelessly for your defense and simply wishes to tell the jury, ‘I’m a big shot, I do it this way, just listen to me,’ you may find the defense of your lawsuit problematic. I believe what truly makes an effective expert witness stand out is the effort and care the individual puts into preparing for your case,” Dr. Jacobs stresses.
The Problem Patient

No matter where you are in your career, you’ve likely encountered challenging or problem patients. They may have been rude to your office staff, tried to manipulate you into prescribing unnecessary pain medication or convinced you to disregard costs for medical services.

Stephen Schroeder, DPM, FACFAS, moderator of the ACFAS podcast, The Challenging Patient, offers several strategies for recognizing and working with difficult patients, the most common of which are manipulative patients.

“They try to achieve a desired goal using deception, coercion or trickery without regard for the interests or needs of others,” cautions Dr. Schroeder. “These patients can be especially challenging for younger providers.”

Dr. Schroeder says manipulative patients will often play on others’ guilt or will take advantage of less experienced clinicians. Some will use “honey” to get what they want by being overly friendly, affectionate or complimentary. Others will use “vinegar” to feign rage, cause contention or threaten legal action. They may threaten to write negative reviews on physician rating websites as well.

Dr. Schroeder also warns of manipulation by proxy where parents will use their children to get what they want or children will use their elderly parents for personal gain. “And beware of the ‘big wig’ who claims to know important people and promises favors seemingly without reciprocity,” adds Dr. Schroeder.

While patients have a right to be involved in their medical decision-making, they may try to use this for malicious purposes or unreasonable demands. To protect yourself, Dr. Schroeder says to “develop a treatment plan, explain it in detail, document the plan well and do not stray from it, even if the patient tries to steer you off course.” He further advises to remain polite yet firm, to continue to help while maintaining appropriate boundaries and to not be afraid to say no.

For more on this topic, listen to The Challenging Patient podcast available at acfasdistancelearning.com/Podcasts.

“They try to achieve a desired goal using deception, coercion or trickery without regard for the interests or needs of others.”

— Stephen Schroeder, DPM, FACFAS
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- **The Foot and Ankle Surgeon** brochure to educate patients on your expertise,
- **Website Resources** to help enrich your practice’s site – linking to FootHealthFacts.org for valuable foot and ankle health information,
- **Media Pitch Guidelines and Templates** for reaching out to the media with your news,
- **Physician Expanded Profile Access** – get new patient referrals from FootHealthFacts.org,
- **Patient Education CDs** featuring print-ready, peer-developed educational brochures highlighting the conditions you treat most often in your office,
- **A Member Logo Library** with guidelines for incorporating the ACFAS logo into your practice materials.

New tools are added regularly to the Marketing Toolbox – watch for additions!
Update

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