



# AMERICAN ORTHOPAEDIC FOOT & ANKLE SOCIETY®

RECONSTRUCTION • SPORTS MEDICINE • TRAUMA • TECHNOLOGY

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ORTHOPAEDIC FOOT & ANKLE  
OUTREACH & EDUCATION FUND

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## The Orthopaedic Distinction

### What is an Orthopaedic Foot and Ankle Surgeon

Orthopaedic foot and ankle surgeons are medical doctors (MD and DO) who specialize in the diagnosis, care, and treatment of patients with disorders of the musculoskeletal system of the foot and ankle. This includes the bones, joints, ligaments, muscles tendons, nerves, and skin. Orthopaedic foot and ankle surgeons use medical, physical, and rehabilitative methods as well as surgery to treat patients of all ages. They perform reconstructive procedures, treat sports injuries, and manage and treat trauma of the foot and ankle.

Orthopaedic foot and ankle surgeons work with physicians of many other specialties, including internal medicine, pediatrics, vascular surgery, endocrinology, radiology, anesthesiology, and others. Medical school curriculum and post-graduate training provides the solid clinical background necessary to recognize medical problems, admit patients to a hospital when necessary, and contribute significantly to the coordination of care appropriate for each patient.

## Education

AOFAS members have the following credentials:

- Completed four years of medical school. The curriculum covers basic and clinical sciences, surgery, internal medicine, pediatrics, family medicine and all other medical specialties
- Completed five years of accredited graduate medical education (residency training) in orthopaedic surgery
- Many orthopaedic foot and ankle surgeons also complete advanced fellowship training in foot and ankle surgery.
- Satisfactory completion of the national medical licensing examination
- Continuing medical education credits over a specific time period.
- Board certification: Certified by or eligible for examination and certification by the American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery or the American Osteopathic Board of Orthopedic Surgery
- Each member must hold membership in the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS).

## Selecting an Orthopaedic Surgeon

When selecting a medical provider to care for your feet and ankles, be sure to ask him/her about:

- Medical school education
- Accredited residency training
- Areas of practice specialization
- Experience in your prescribed treatment (surgical and/or non-surgical)