



# Public Opinion Research on Foot Health and Care

Findings from a Survey of 1000 US Adults

March 2014

Prepared by:



# Methodology

- Edge Research conducted a national opinion survey on behalf of the American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA) on attitudes toward foot health and foot care.
- Online survey of 1021 US adults, age 18 or older
  - Recruited from a national panel, and controlled to be census representative by gender, age, region, and ethnicity
  - Conducted February 19 – February 26, 2014
  - Survey approximately 15 minutes in length
  - Many of the questions were tracked from a similar study in 2010, to see if there have been any changes over time



Up arrow indicates a significant increase from 2010 survey. The % indicates the net increase since 2010



Down arrow indicates a significant decrease from 2010 survey. The % indicates the net decrease since 2010

# Key Findings

## From Head to Toe

- There have not been a lot of attitudinal changes since 2010 -- the foot continues to rank low on the list of body parts/functions that Americans see as important to their health and well-being.
- At the same time, almost 8 in 10 Americans have experienced a foot problem, and half say it has impacted their quality of life. Those with regular foot pain tend to have a host of other health issues.

## Foot for Thought

- While in theory US adults understand the importance of foot health, they don't think about it often, and don't care for their feet as regularly as teeth, eyes or some other body parts.
- The majority trim their toenails, but after that, less than half adhere to other foot care regimens. Women are more likely to care for their feet than men.
- Good news -- more say they would like to know more about how they can care for their feet than in 2010!

## Puzzled by Podiatry

- Americans continue to have little knowledge of and experience with podiatrists – these numbers have not changed since 2010.
- Because of this, more would seek out a PCP for help with a foot problem, and/or self medicate.
- Those who have visited a podiatrist are extremely satisfied with their care; in fact, more are satisfied than those who sought out a PCP for foot care.

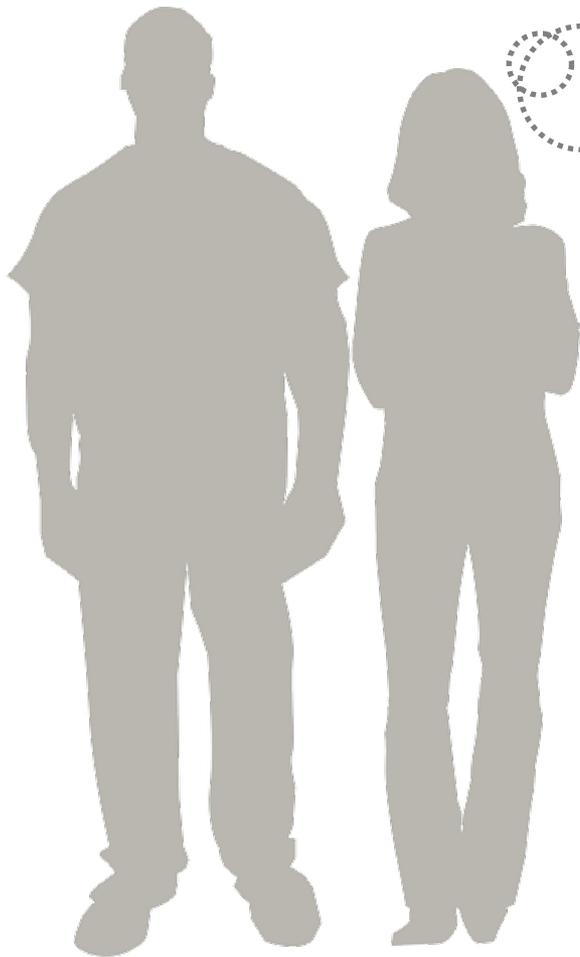
## Foot Over Heels

- When it comes to shoes, high heels are the #1 culprit of foot pain.
- Most women who own heels say these shoes hurt their feet.
- But that doesn't stop them from buying them – the average woman who owns high heels owns 9 pairs!
- And they are pretty liberal when it comes to height – almost half say they will wear 3 inch heels or higher.

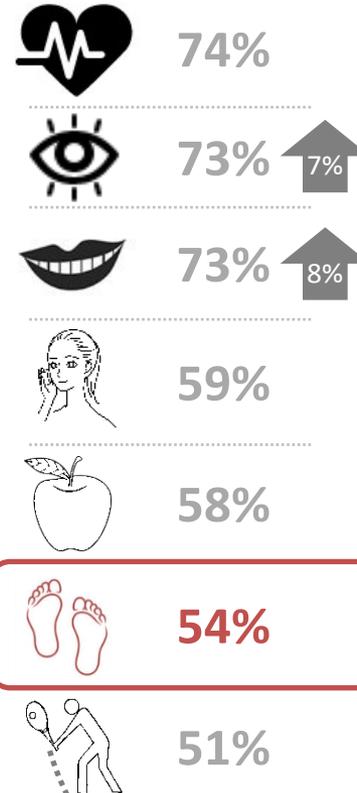
# From Head to Toe



**From Head to Toe:** Foot care continues to fall behind heart, eye, teeth, skin care, and nutrition. However, it is seen as slightly more important than regular exercise.

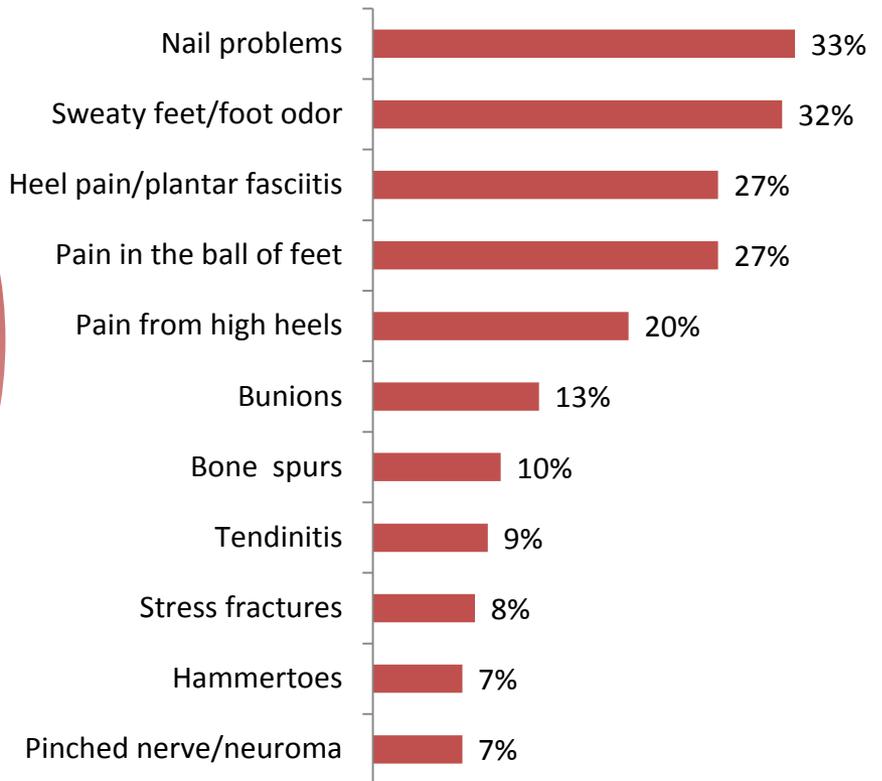
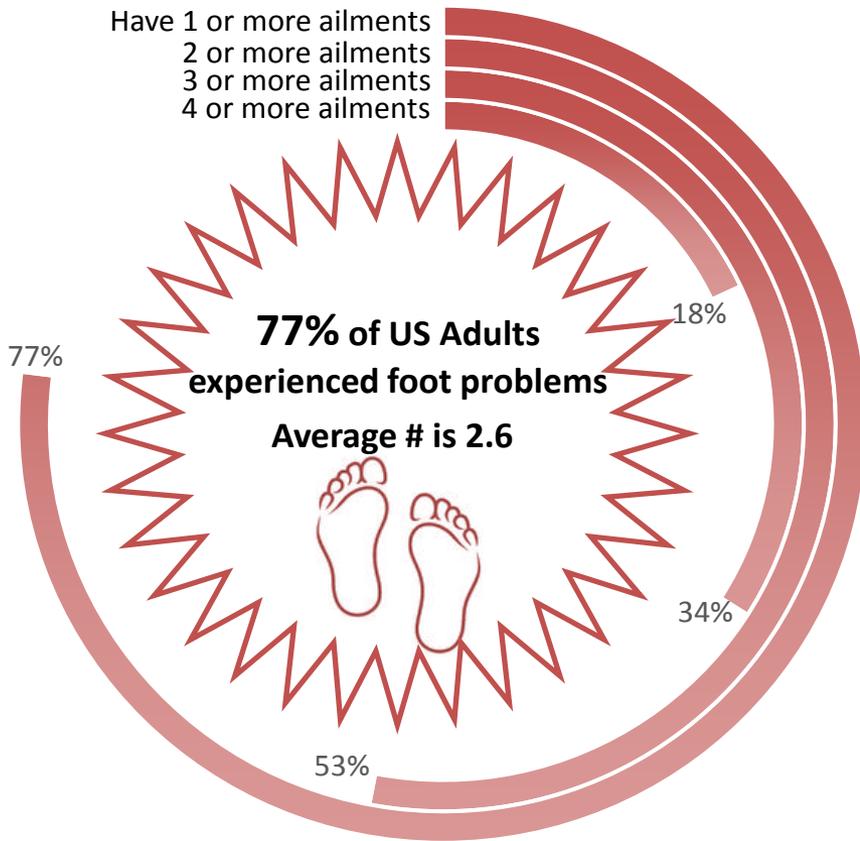


*How important is care of each to you?*

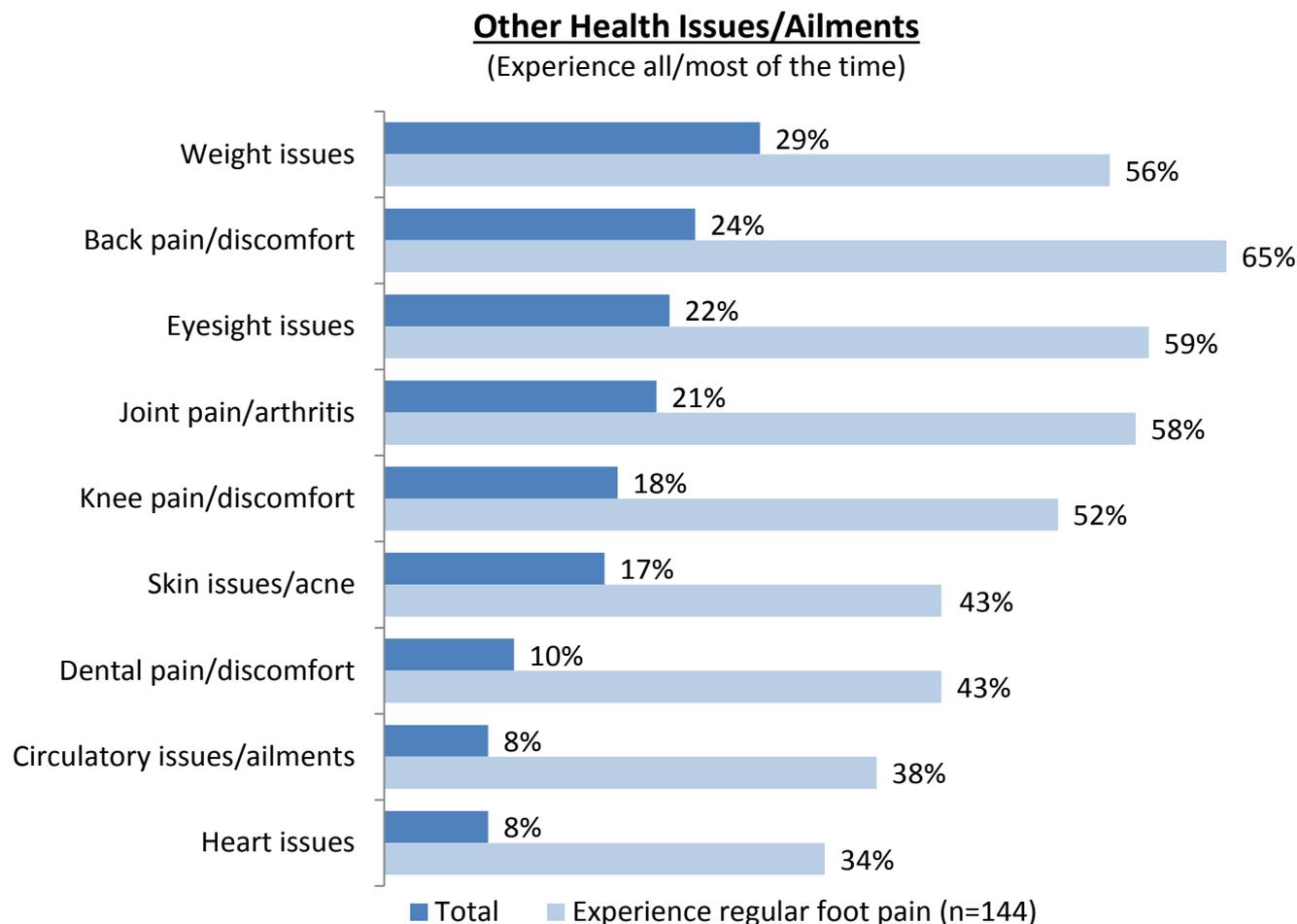


**What Ails You:** That said, almost 8 in 10 Americans have experienced a foot problem -- nail problems and foot odor being the most common. This has remained consistent since 2010.

**Experienced a Foot Ailment**

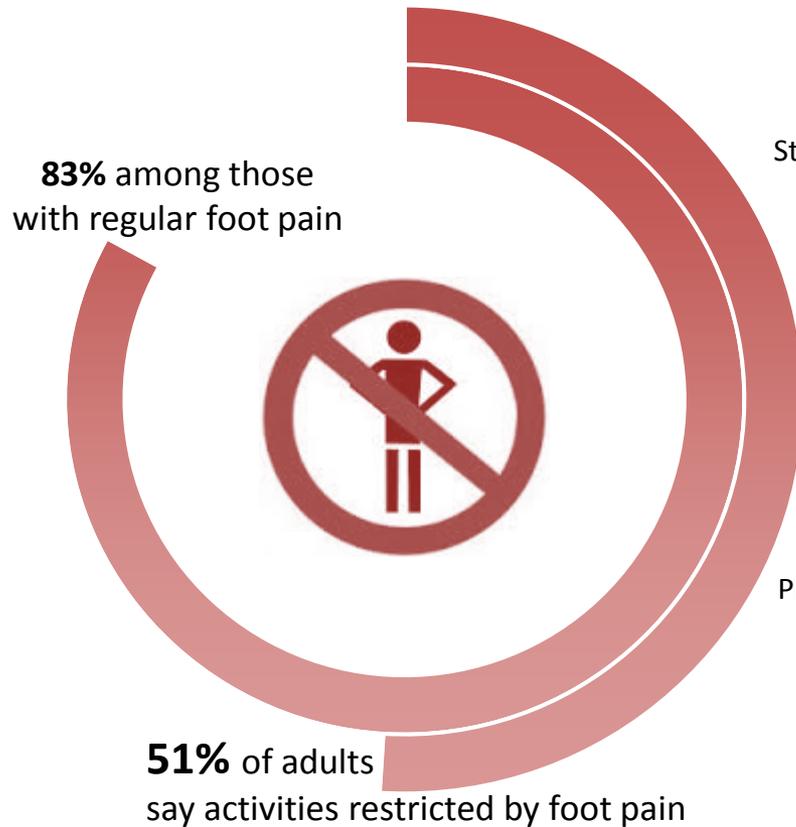


## Connection with Other Health Issues: Those who experience regular foot pain are significantly more likely to experience problems in other areas of the body.

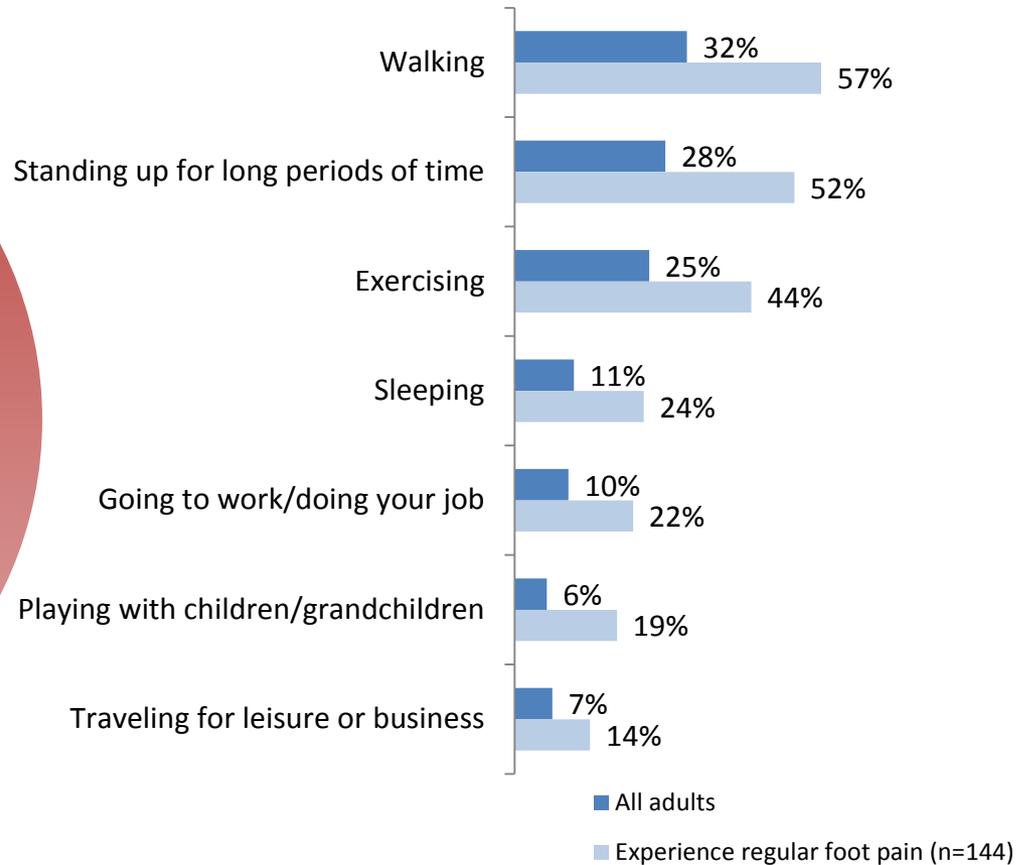


# Impact on Quality of Life: Half of adults say that foot pain has restricted their activities in some way, most notably walking and standing for long periods.

## Any Activities Restricted by Foot Pain?

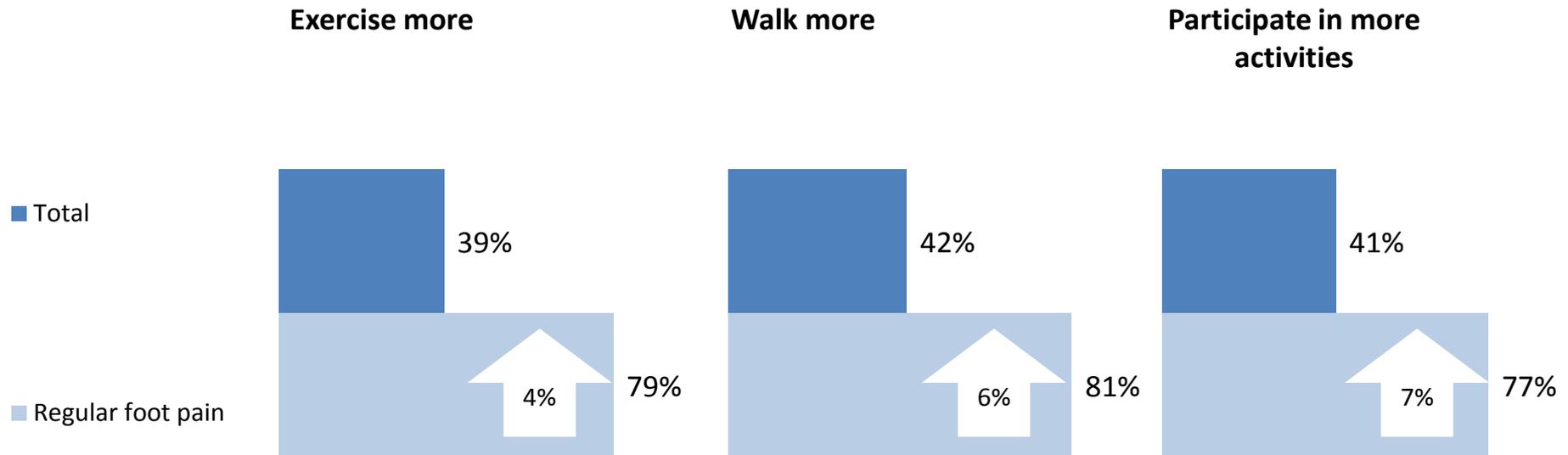


## Activities Restricted by Foot Pain



## Wish List: Those who experience regular foot pain wish they could do a lot more on their feet.

### Would Do the Following More if Feet Didn't Hurt (Describe at least somewhat)



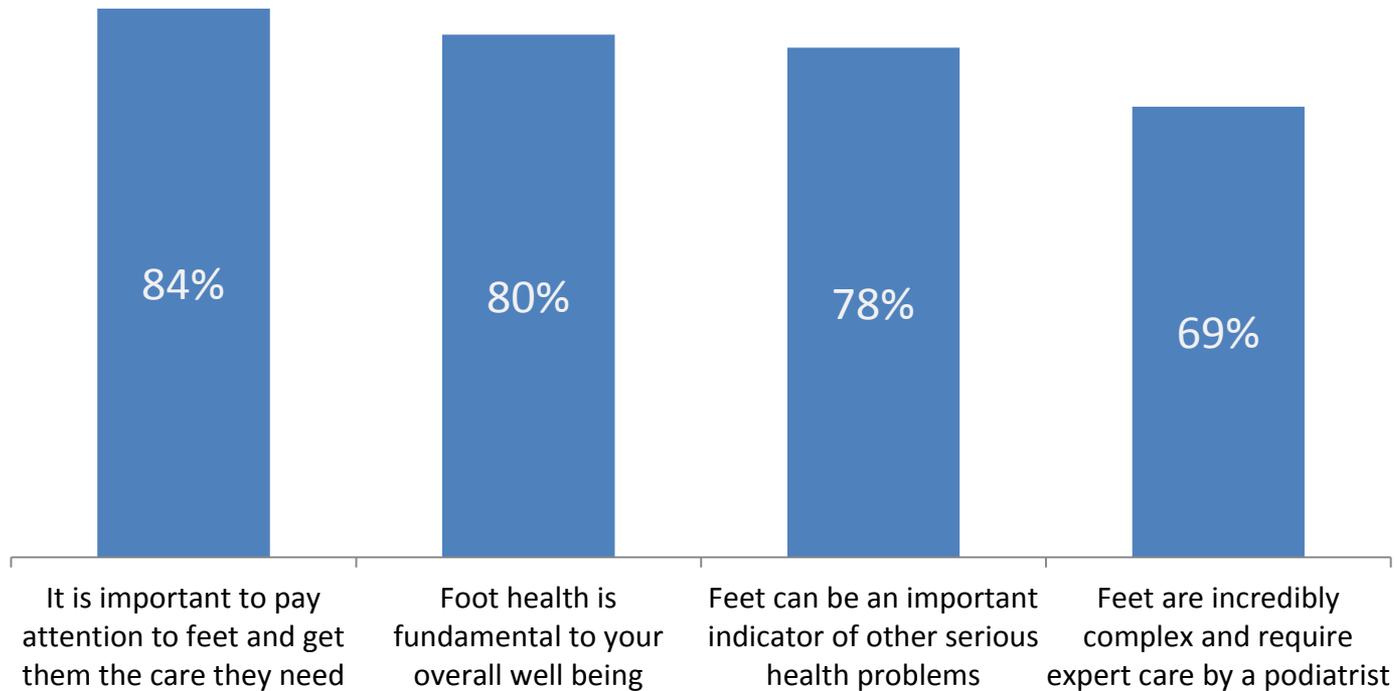
# Foot for Thought



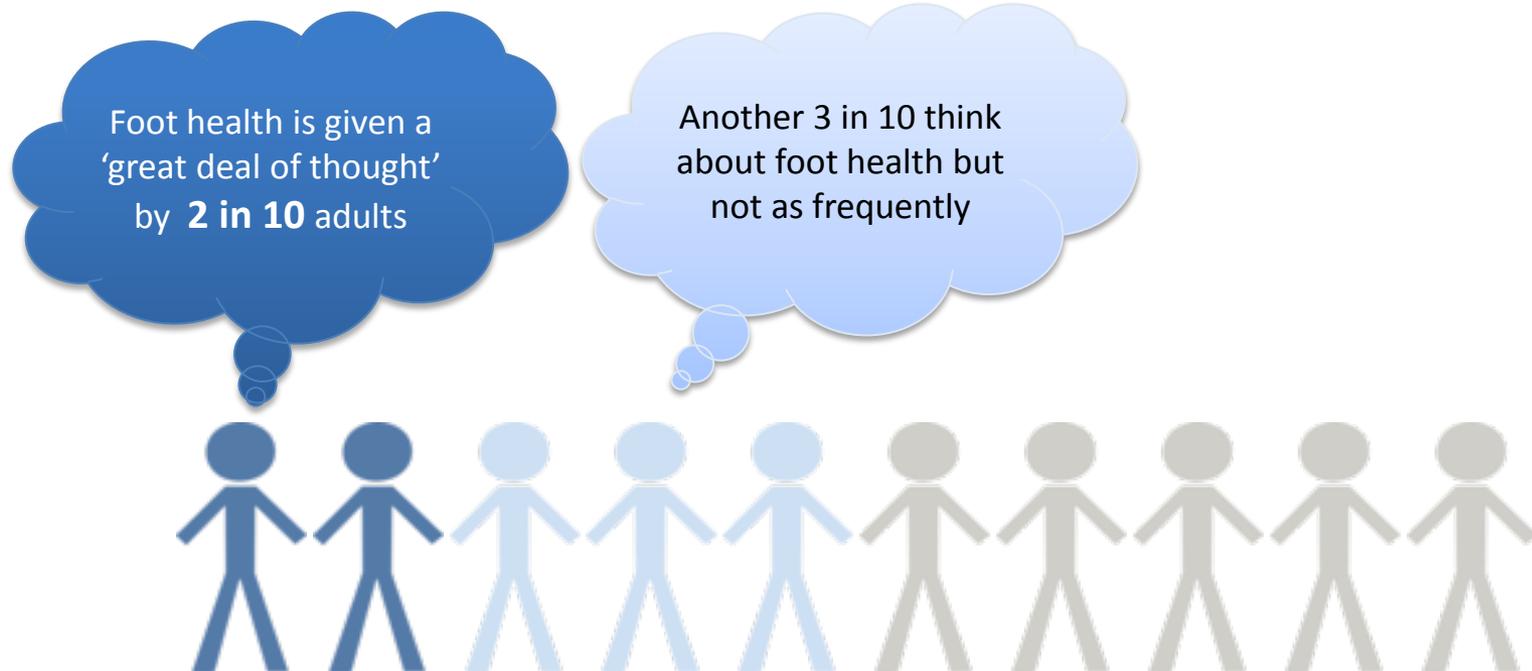
## Foot First: In theory, Americans believe foot health is fundamental to well-being.

### Importance of Foot Care

(Agree with statement)

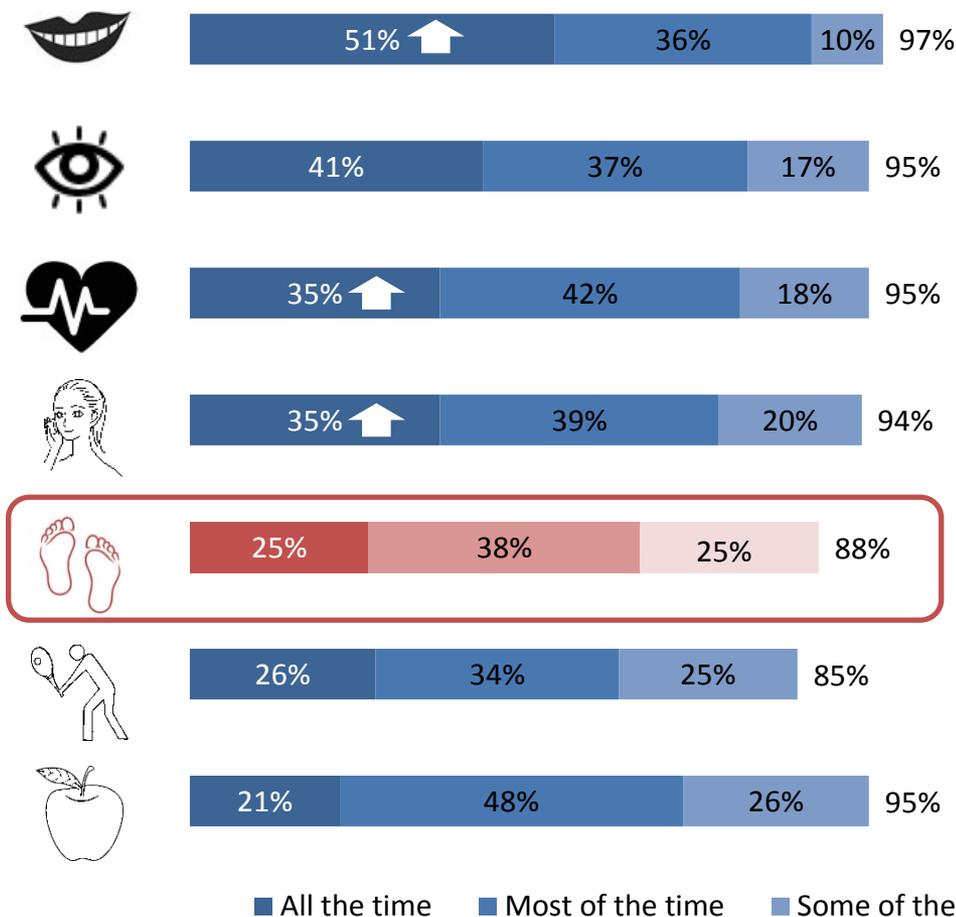


**Foot for Thought:** Only 2 in 10 think about their foot health regularly, and this number has remained consistent since 2010.

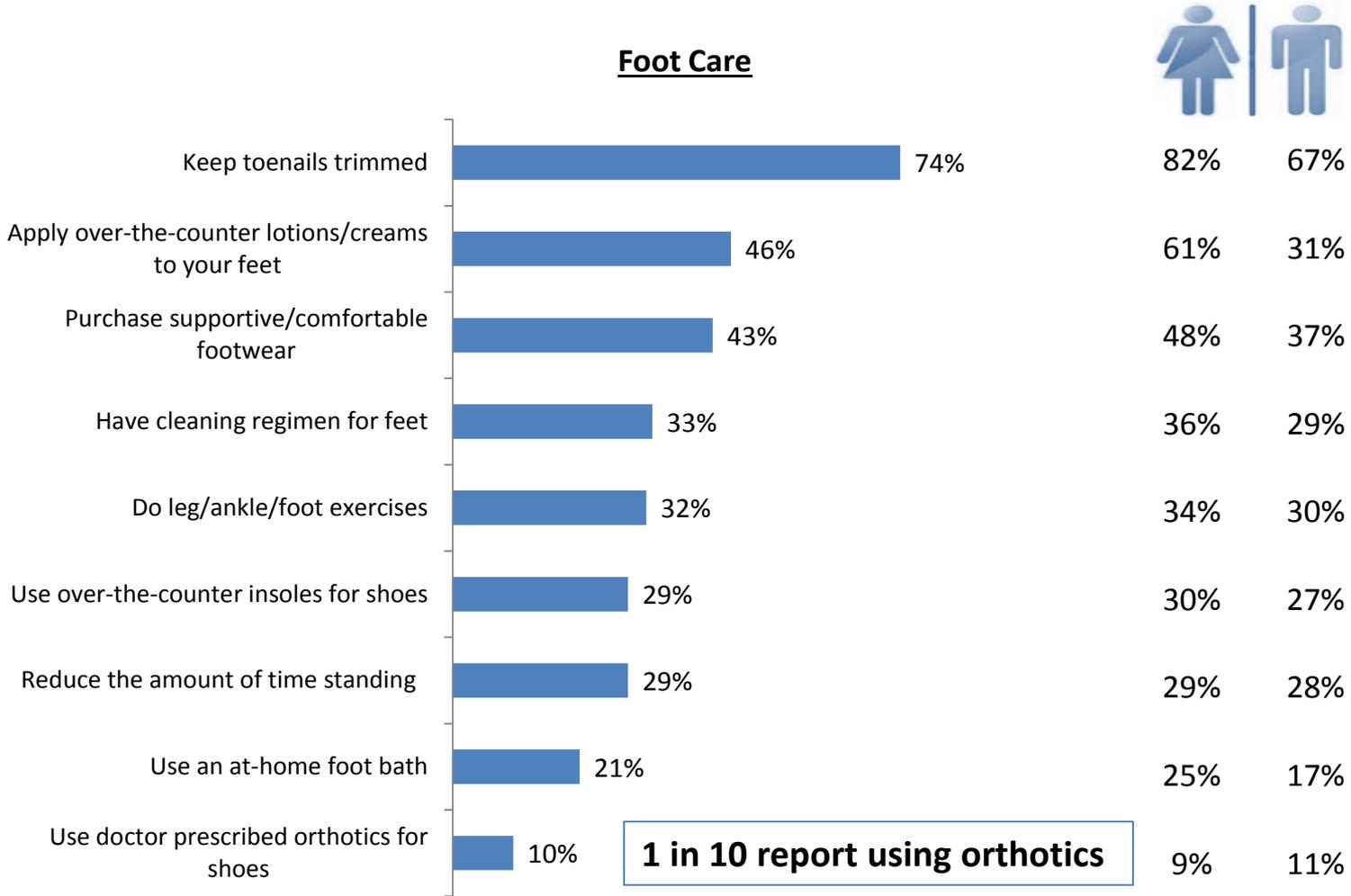


# A Foot in Need: Feet are not cared for with as much regularity as other other parts of the body. The number who report caring for their feet has not moved since 2010, while emphasis on some other body parts has.

## Frequency take care of/do each



**Foot Care:** The bare minimum for most adults is to keep their toenails trimmed. Women are more likely than men to care for their feet.



**More Information!** There is an increase since 2010 in the desire to learn more about caring for feet.

**Desire to Learn More About Feet**



63% want to know more about how to take care of their feet

5%



50% want to know where to find the best podiatrist in their area

11%



47% want to know where to seek help for foot pains/ailments they experience

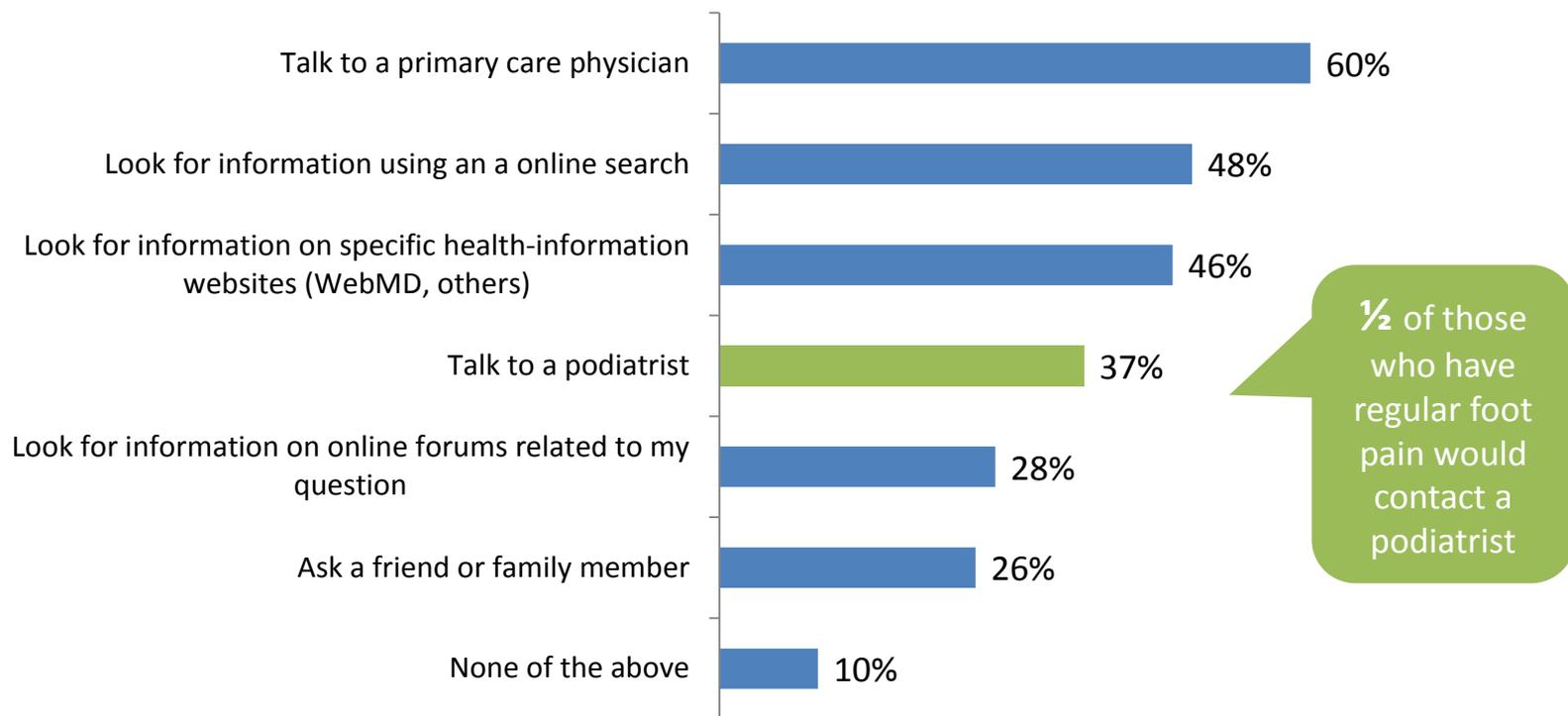
8%

# Puzzled by Podiatry



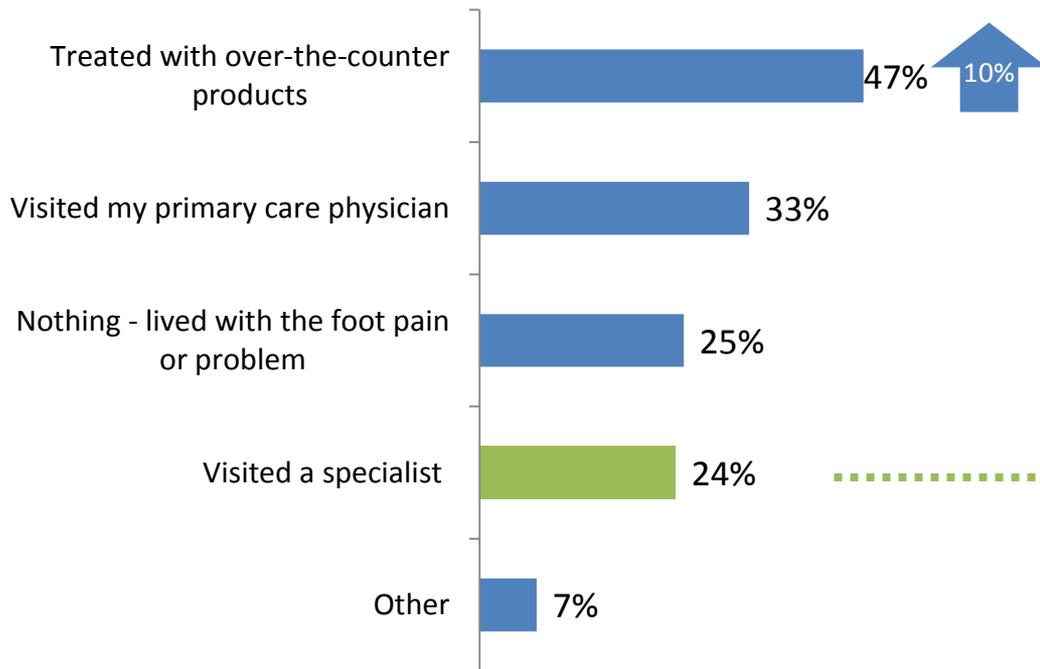
**Go-to Sources:** Podiatrists are not the #1 go-to source for foot advice. Most would talk to their primary care physician first, followed by an online search. A third would seek out a podiatrist.

### Foot Health Information Sources



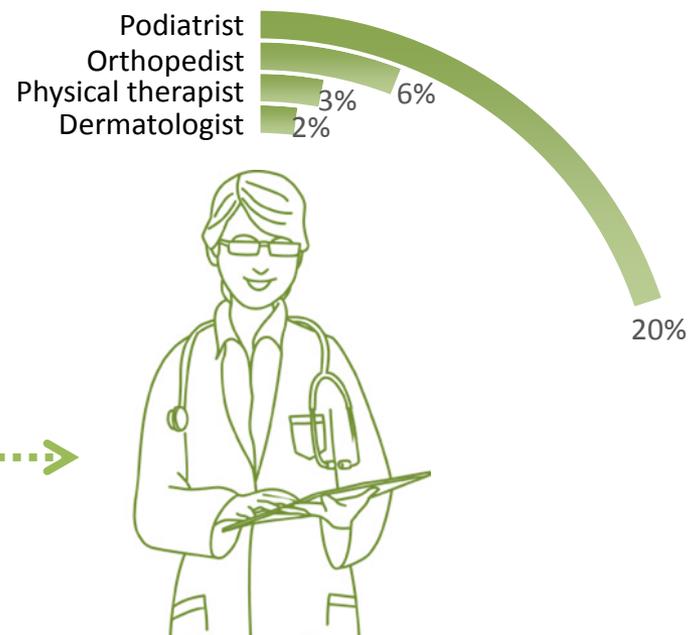
**Treatment:** The most common remedy for foot ailments is self-medicating, and this has actually increased since 2010. About a quarter have visited a specialist, podiatrists being the most common.

### Actions Taken to Address Foot Ailments

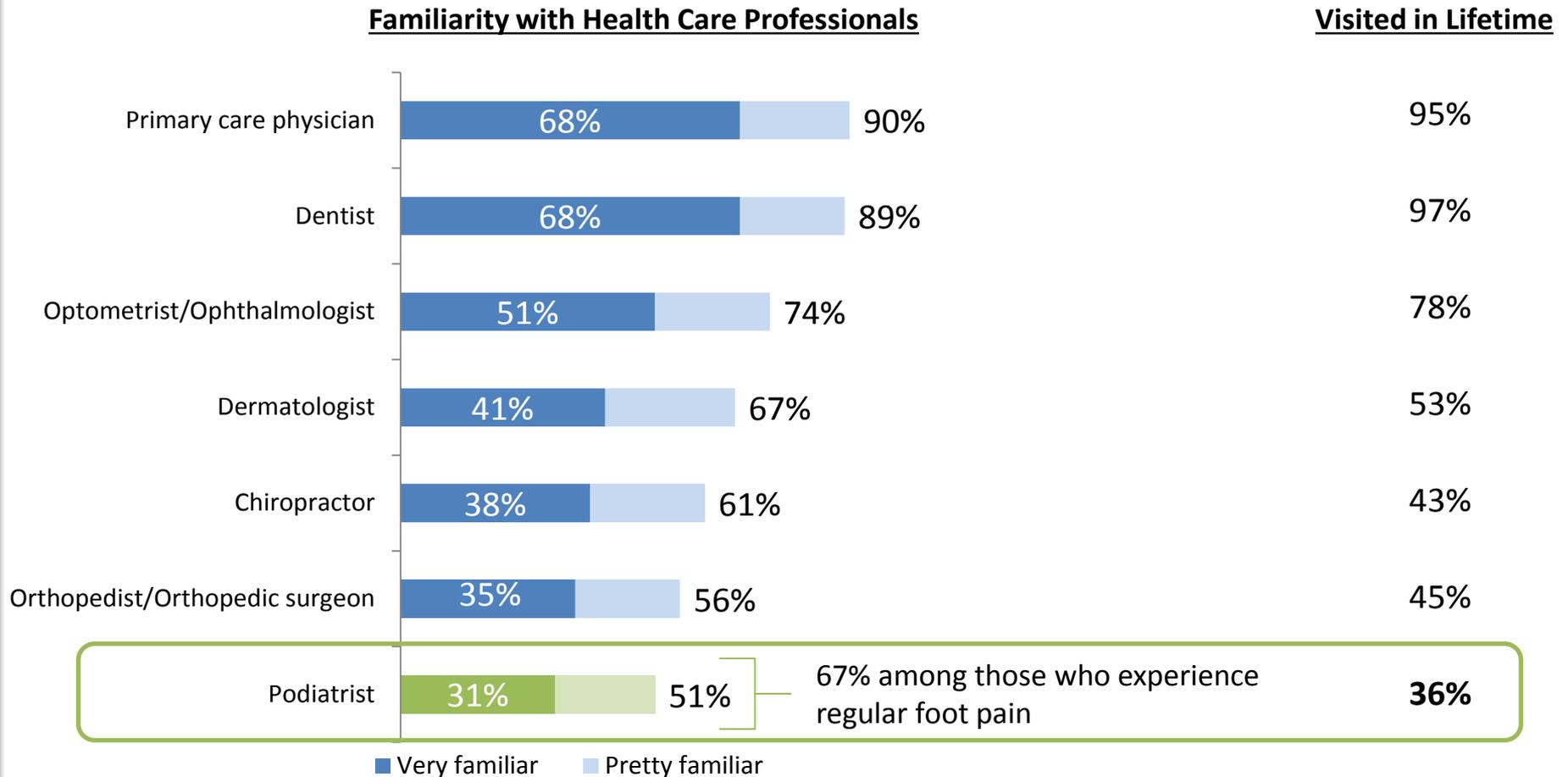


### Visited Specialist

(out of Total n=1021)

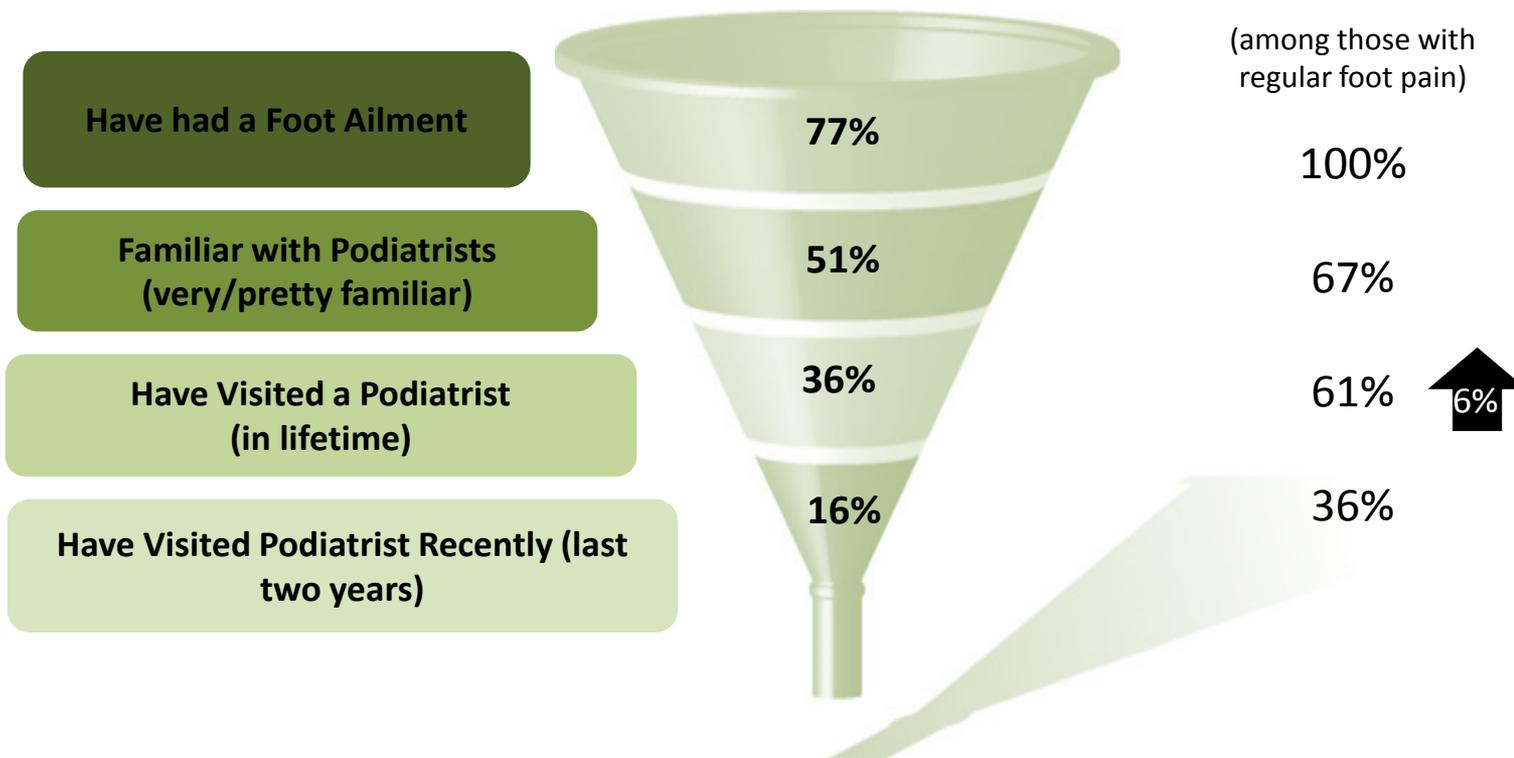


**Limited Knowledge:** Familiarity with podiatrists' work continues to be low compared to other health professionals, and fewer have direct experience (numbers consistent from 2010).



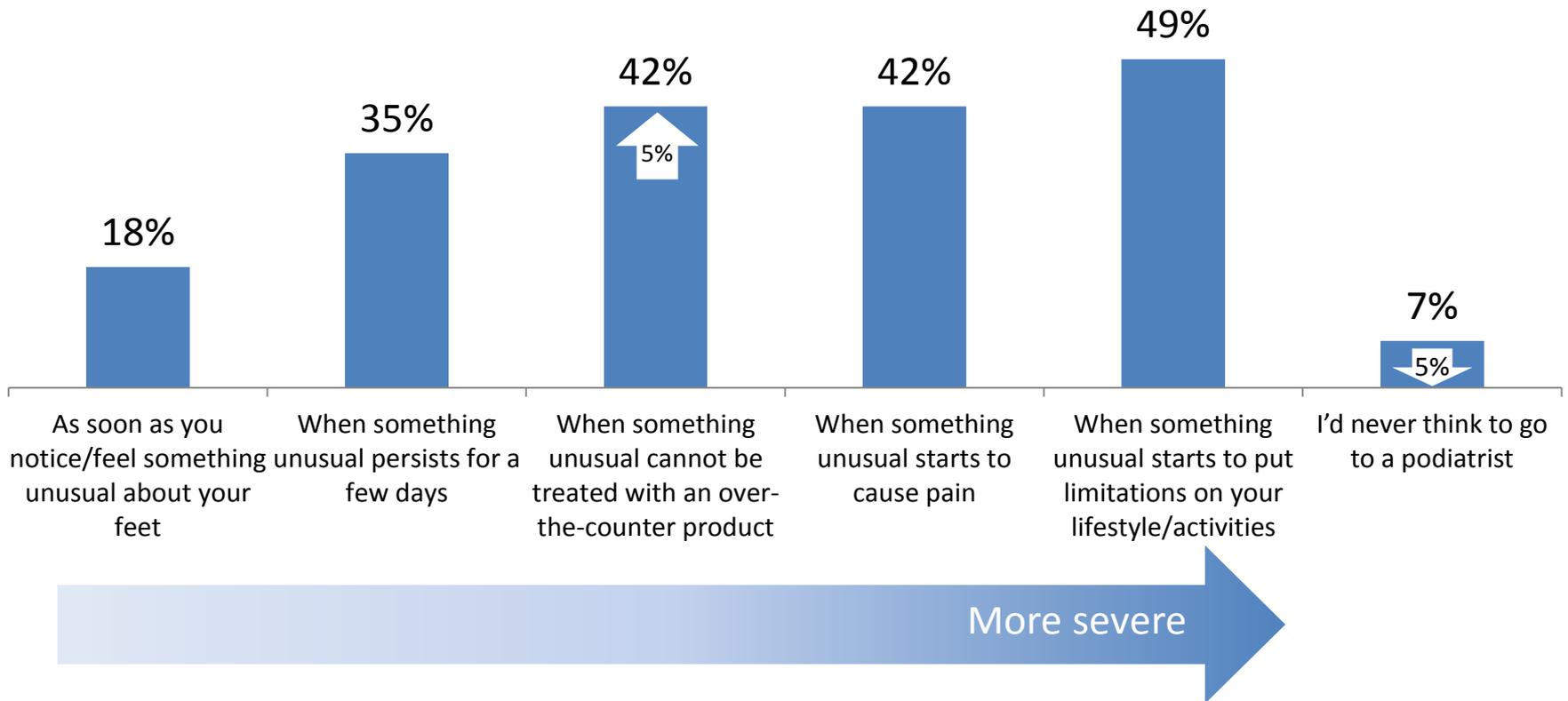
**The Podiatric Funnel:** While foot ailments are widespread, familiarity and experience with podiatrists are considerably lower. Those with regular foot pain are almost twice as likely to visit a podiatrist, and this number has increased since 2010.

Total US Adults

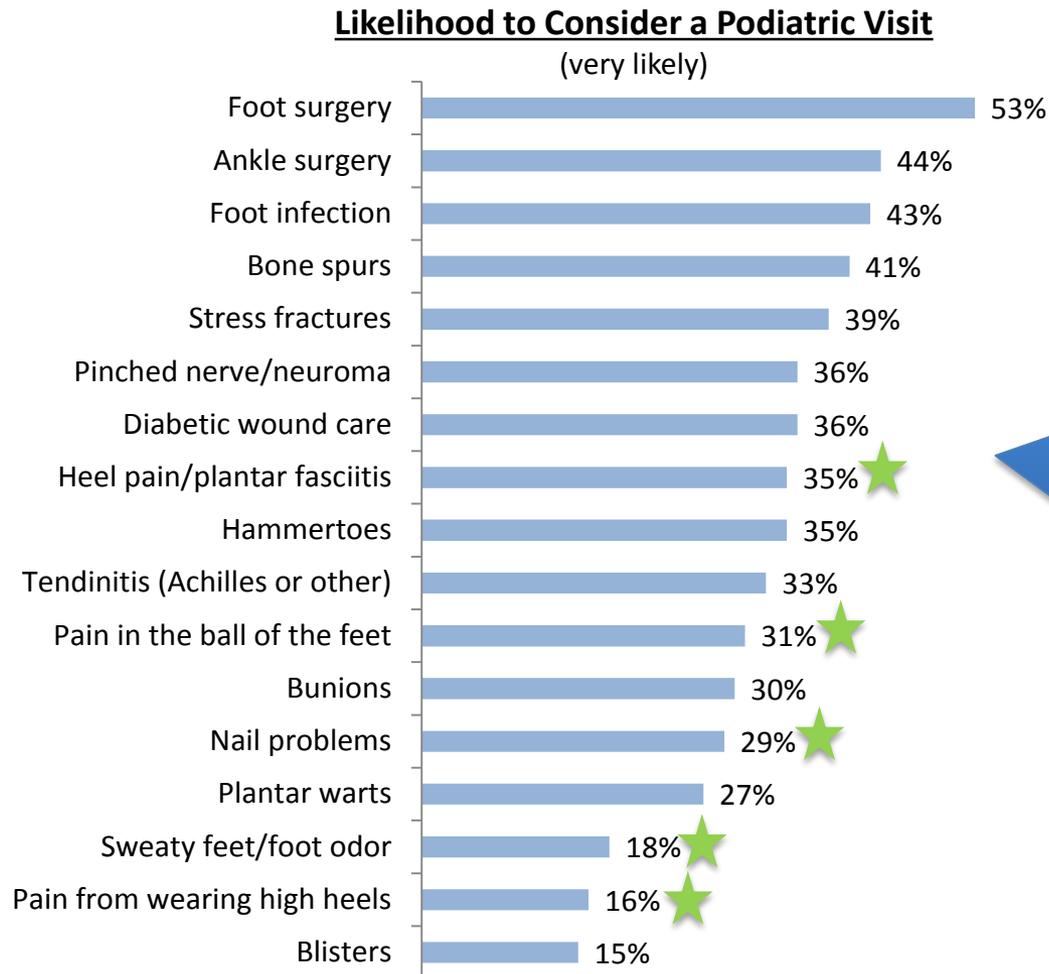


# What Prompts a Visit? Lack of knowledge and experience means that problems with feet do not often prompt immediate attention and a visit to the podiatrist.

## When to Visit a Podiatrist



**Considerations:** As in 2010, the more severe the foot issue (i.e., surgery), the more likely to consider a podiatrist. Most would not consider a podiatrist for other issues.



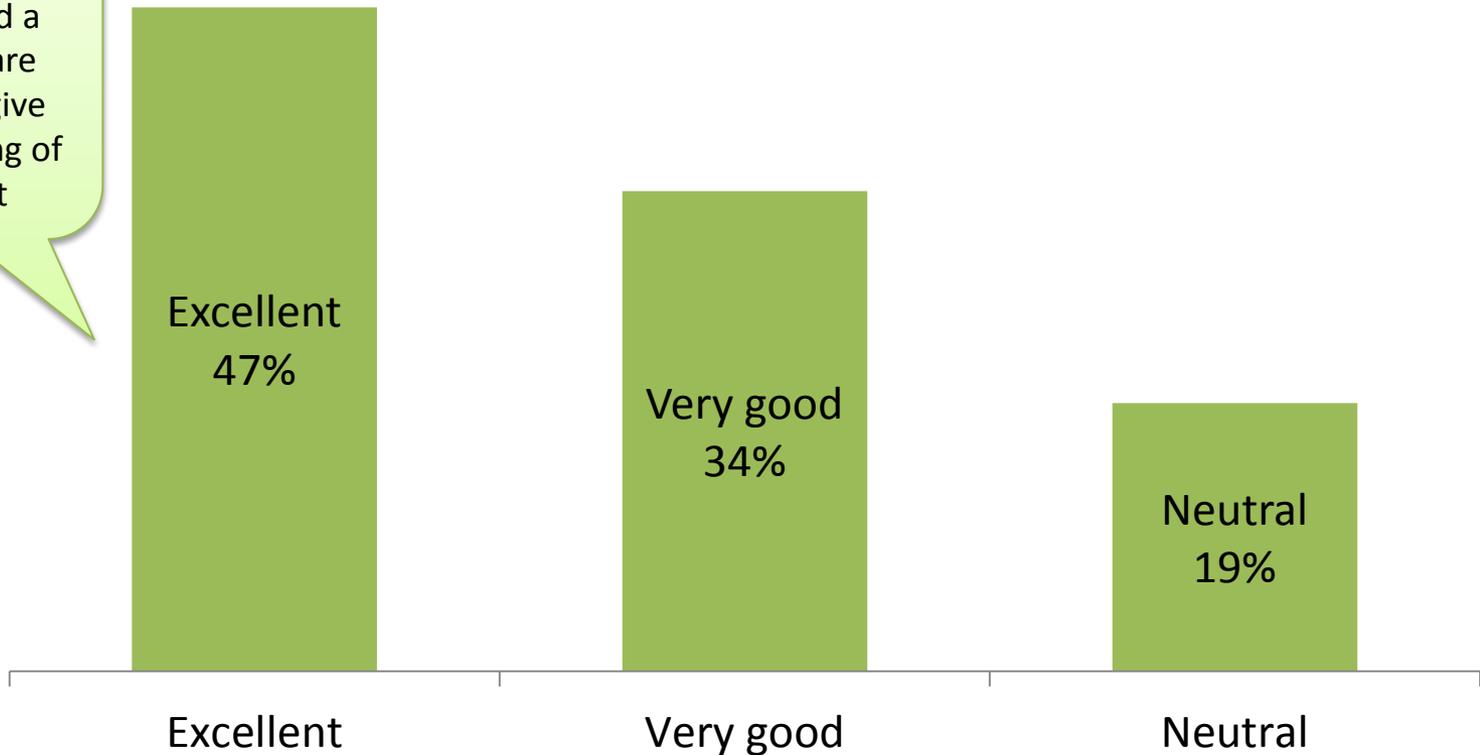
★ Of those with the most common foot ailments, few are likely to visit a podiatrist to get them addressed.

**Podiatric Patients Are Pleased!** Those who have visited podiatrists give them high satisfaction scores, higher than primary care physicians (who more visit for foot ailments).

**Experience with Podiatrists**

(among those who visited Podiatrist, n=201)

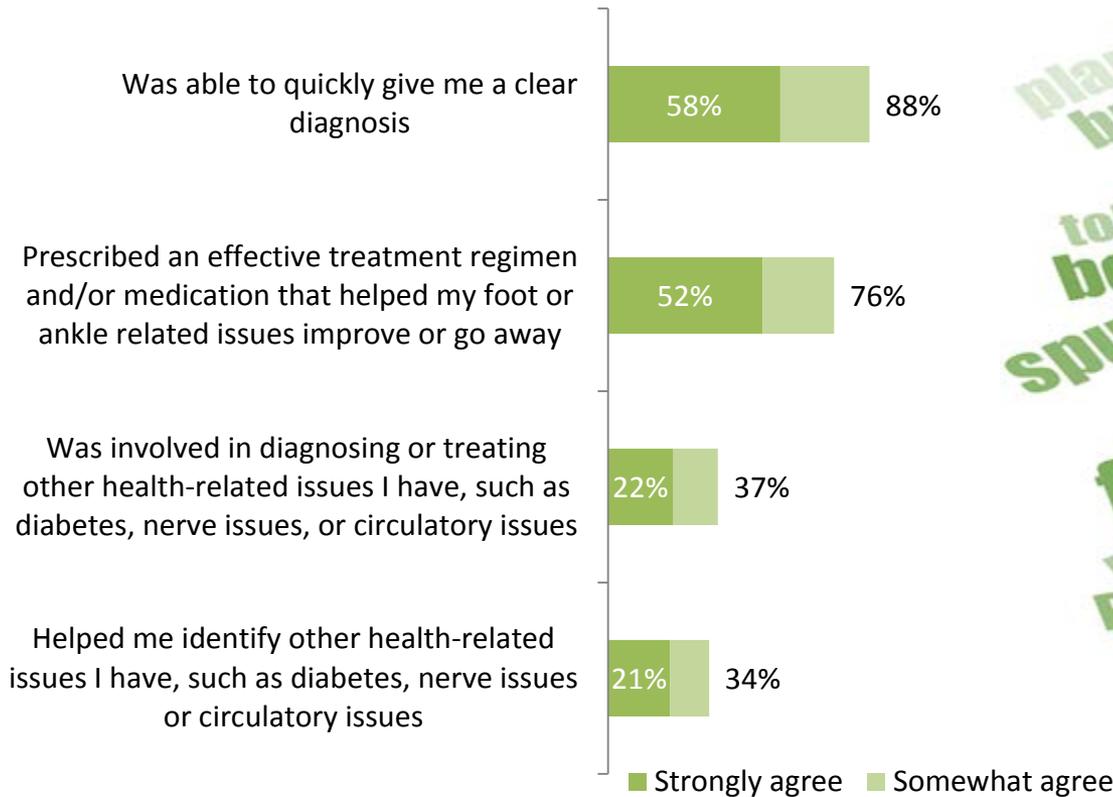
Only a third (34%) of those who visited a primary care physician give them a rating of excellent



# Positive Experiences! Patients agree that podiatrists provided clear, effective, and timely care. A third say their podiatrist identified, diagnosed, and/or treated other health issues during their appointment.

## Experience with Podiatrist

(among those who visited Podiatrist, n=201)



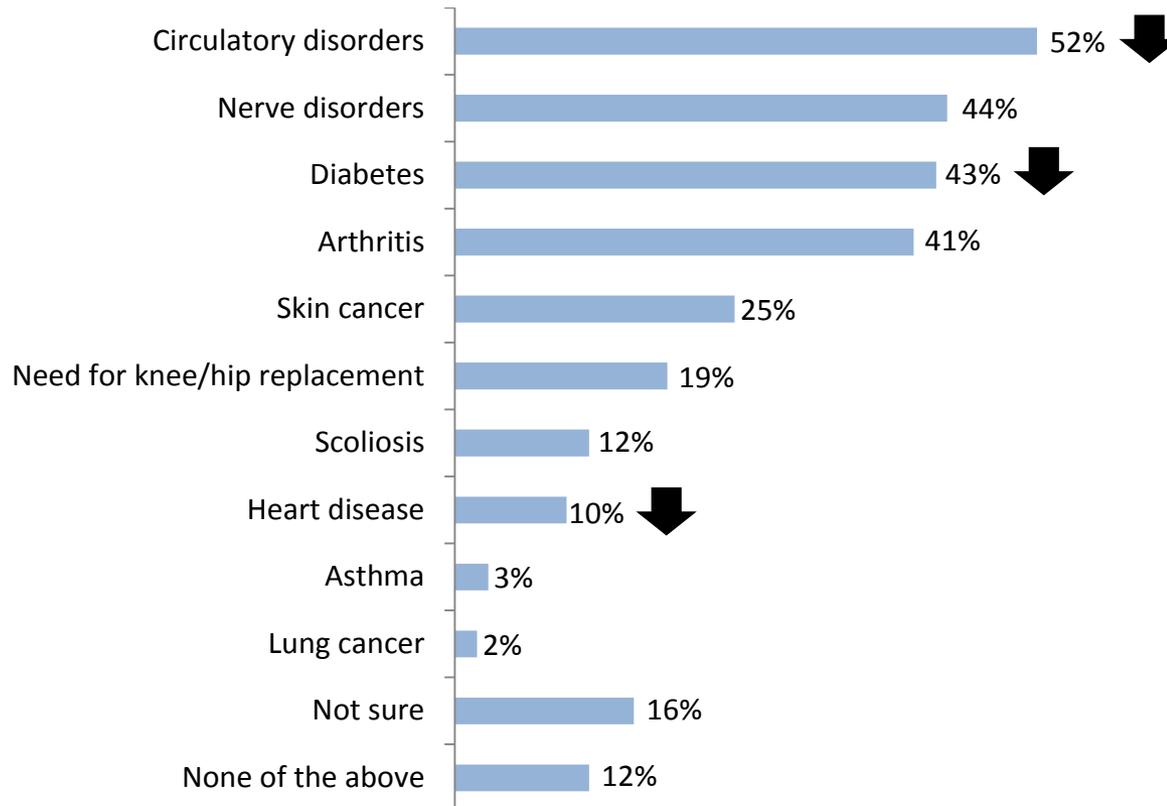
## Reasons for Visiting

(among those who visited Podiatrist, n=201)



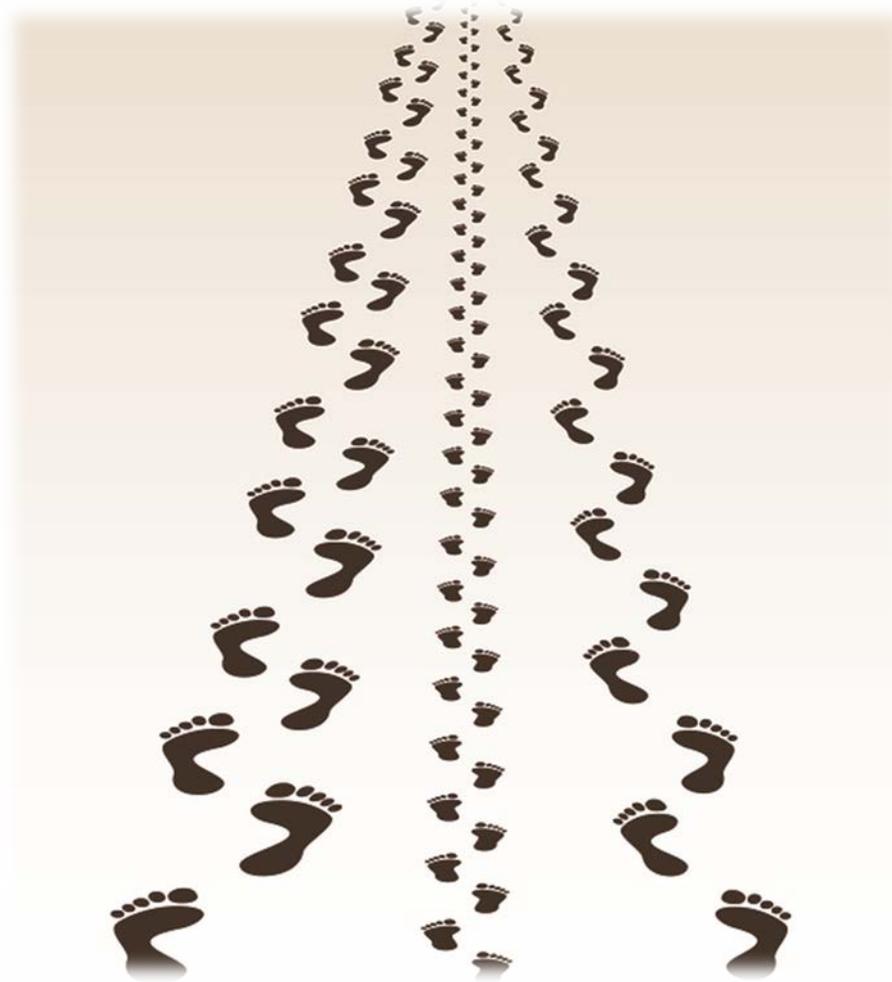
## Health Connections? There continues to be limited awareness that other health issues can be detected during a foot exam.

### Awareness of Health Issues That Can Be Detected While Examining the Feet



Those with multiple foot ailments and those with a history of diabetes are most likely to link foot health to other health issues

# Foot Over Heels

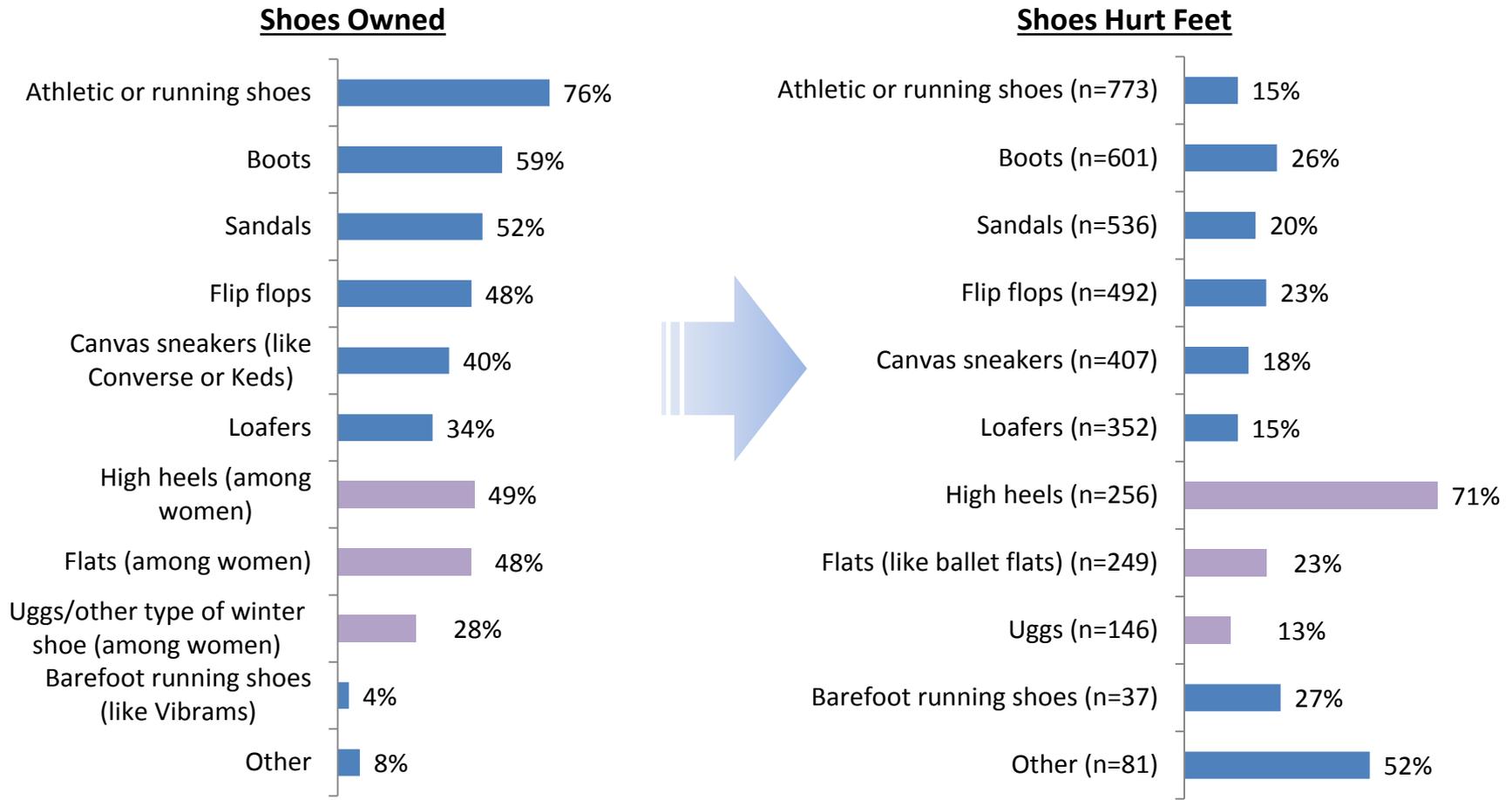


**Comfort and Style:** A majority of adults would like better looking feet and more comfortable shoes. There are only minimal gender differences.

What Adults Want



**Footwear and Foot Pain:** The most common culprit for pain is high heels! Nearly half of women wear them and most experience pain. Other shoes cause pain for far fewer who wear them.



**How High is Too High?** Though a majority of women who wear high heels experience pain, almost half can withstand wearing heels that are 3" or higher.

**How High is Too High**

(among women who own high heels, n=256)



**5 inch: 92% too high!**

**4 inch: 77%**

**3 inch: 54%**

**2 inch: 20%**

**1 inch: 5%**

- 49% of women wear high heels
- 71% experience pain

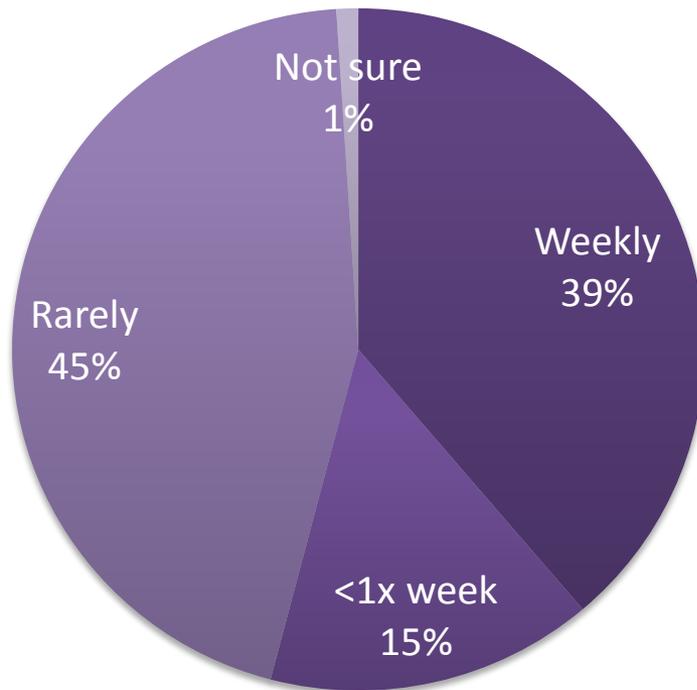
All high heels are too high: 3%

Not sure: 4%

# Many Heels for Occasional Use: Most of those who own high heels don't wear them regularly, but that doesn't stop them from having a large collection!

## How often do you wear high heels?

(among women who own high heels, n=256)



## Number of Pairs of High Heels Owned

(among women who own high heels)



The average woman who owns high heels owns 9 pairs!