

High heeled winter boots dangerous on ice and snow

(COLOGNE, January 2015) This winter's fashionable high-heeled boots put women at risk for slips, falls, and injuries on ice and snow, warns Cologne foot and ankle surgeon (DOCTOR DANIEL THULL), DPM, (ACFAS).

These popular boots typically feature tall, spiked heels and narrow, pointed toes.

"Wearing high-heels makes you more unstable when walking or standing on dry surfaces, let alone slippery ones like ice or snow," says Dr. Thull. "A stylish low-heeled winter boot is a lot more fashionable than a cast and crutches."

Dr. Thull also recommends women scuff-up the soles of new boots, or purchase adhesive rubber soles, to provide greater traction.

Falls from high-heeled winter boots can lead to a number of injuries, depending on how the woman loses her balance. If her ankles roll inward or outward, she can break her ankles. If her ankle twists, ligaments can be stretched or torn, causing an ankle sprain. According to the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons consumer Web site, FootHealthFacts.org, broken and sprained ankles can be present at the same time. Dr. Thull is one of 6,000 ACFAS members.

"This time of year I see a variety of broken bones occurring in patients who have slipped on the ice," says Dr. Thull. "These include broken toes, metatarsals, heels and ankles."

Dr. Thull urges women hurt from slips and falls in high-heeled winter boots to contact his office for prompt evaluation and treatment. In the meantime, immediately use the "R.I.C.E." method – rest, ice, compression and elevation – to help reduce swelling, pain and further injury.

"Delaying treatment can result in long-term complications such as chronic ankle instability and pain, arthritis, or deformity," says Dr. Thull. "Even if you're able to walk on the injured foot, pain, swelling, or bruising indicates a serious injury."