

**Feet Serve as Shock Absorbers for the Body:  
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Deputy Board Chairman, Board of Trustees**



A study by researchers at Hospital for Special Surgery (HSS) and Harvard Medical School suggests new guidelines may be in order for evaluating and treating lower extremity pain. Investigators set out to determine if there was a relation between foot pain and lower extremity joint pain, and they found a significant association between foot pain and knee or hip pain. "Studying the interaction between the knee and the foot, or the hip and the foot is very important because it's a kinetic chain," says **Rock G. Positano, DPM ('88), MPH**, director of the Non-Surgical Foot and Ankle Service, Joe DiMaggio Sports Medicine Foot and Ankle Center at HSS and Deputy Board Chairman, Board of Trustees, NYCPM.

The kinetic chain, the notion that the body's joints and segments have an effect on one another during movement, can play a key role in pain. "The foot is the first part of the body that makes contact with the ground. Its primary function is a shock absorber. If the shock-absorbing capability of the foot is somehow altered or minimized, it's going to affect other body parts," Dr. Positano explains. Researchers found that foot pain was associated with bilateral and same-side knee pain in men and women. For example, men with right foot pain compared to those with no foot pain were five to seven times more likely to have pain in their right knee or in both knees. "Our overall goal was to provide practitioners with evidence-based guidance for evaluation and options for treatment for their patients," the researchers wrote in their paper, which appeared in the *Journal of the American Podiatric Medical Association* (Article appeared in *PM News*, 10-12-17 issue).