



# Benjamin Weaver

Doctor of Podiatric Medicine

Photo by Kevin Wildt

## IN HER SHOES

“Don’t sacrifice your feet for fashion,” says Dr. Benjamin W. Weaver – while smoking a cigar and lounging in a pair of conch-embellished flip-flops with a two-inch wedge.

Of course, he only wore the heels to humor us as we photographed him *In Her Shoes*. Weaver was such a good sport, in fact, that he allowed his office team to paint his toenails with a bright red shade that complemented his suit. He did stop short of shaving his legs. (Whew!)

Weaver’s sense of humor is one of the reasons visiting Central Kansas Podiatry Associates is such a great experience and why everyone in his office loves working with him. That includes his wife, Brooke, who has been by his side helping him build their practice from the ground up. Together they have built one of the most successful podiatry practices in the country.

His office team consists mainly of women, and that’s the way he prefers it since nearly 70% of his patients are female. While women have many of the same foot issues as men, we also have special needs related to pregnancy, as well as stress fractures due to decreased estrogen levels and cosmetic issues like bunions, hammertoes and nail deformity. And yes, self-induced pain, thanks to our penchant for wearing impractical and uncomfortable shoes. They look so good on – can they really be that bad?

“Let’s put it this way,” says Weaver, “*Sex in the City* was one of the best things to happen for podiatrists.” All those strappy Manolo Blahniks and Jimmy Choos with the three-inch stilettos were good for business – but bad for fashion conscious feet.

According to Weaver, a woman who wears heels every day is damaging her feet by not allowing the Achilles Tendon to stretch. Eventually it will shorten and they will experience more foot pain, especially as she ages.

You can also find a few “arch” villains at the opposite extreme. Flip flops are not much better since they usually offer little or no arch support. So, what is a fashionista to do? Weaver has a few suggestions. Look for a good quality shoe that is well-made by people who understand feet. If you love Crocs, look for Crocs RX brand (which CKPA happens to carry). It’s also important to replace your shoes before they give out and never buy anything without trying it on. “Shoe manufacturers are not consistent when it comes to size. It depends on where they are made,” says Weaver. “Our feet also tend to get longer and wider as we get older, so you’re not going to wear the same size all your life. A woman will usually gain at least a half a size after her second pregnancy.”

And what does a man get with his second child? An excuse to purchase a box of cigars. ☺

~MAYLENE FLETCHER

“Funny that a pair of really nice shoes make us feel good in our heads - at the extreme opposite end of our bodies.”

~Levende Waters