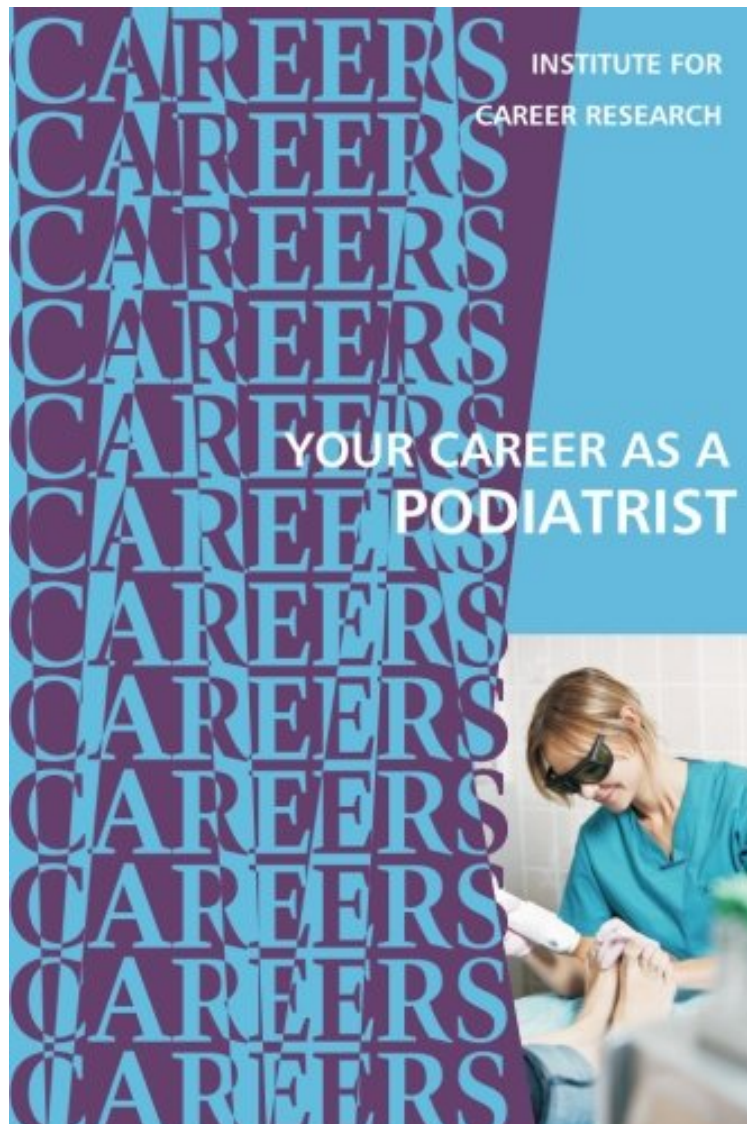


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Your Career as a Podiatrist: Doctor of Podiatric Medicine (DPM)

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Institute For Career Research : Your Career as a Podiatrist: Doctor of Podiatric Medicine (DPM) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Your Career as a Podiatrist: Doctor of Podiatric Medicine (DPM):

THE GREAT RENAISSANCE ARTIST Leonardo da Vinci said, "The human foot is a masterpiece of engineering and a work of art." It is hard to disagree with that. The human foot can be a thing of beauty, and

usually functions extremely well. But when anything goes wrong with it, the human foot can be a source of nearly unbearable pain and frustration. Considering the amount of work it has to do, bearing up under great pressure as we walk or run, or even when we are only standing still, it is truly remarkable what the fragile human foot can manage. There are 26 bones in the human foot and ankle. That is one out of every four of the bones in the whole human body! In addition, there are 33 joints and 100 muscles, tendons and ligaments. No wonder the foot requires its own special doctor. That specialist is the podiatrist. Podiatrists diagnose and treat illnesses, injuries, and deformities of the human feet and ankles including the foot muscles, joints, or bones. They work with children and seniors, athletes and the obese, civilians and veterans. The problems that podiatrists deal with can be relatively simple, like a corn that needs removing. They can also be extremely complicated, even to the point of requiring surgery. From the simplest to the most complicated cases, the podiatrist is rarely dealing with a patient who is not in significant pain. The term chiropodist is often confused with podiatrist. It is an older term for what was once the same profession. In the US, only the term podiatrist is used in reference to the fully-trained professional foot specialist. About 50 years ago, the US training schools changed their names to only include the word podiatry. Graduates were thereafter awarded a Doctor of Podiatric Medicine (DPM) degree. Some podiatrists are clear that they chose this field because they were impatient to get to work. Getting licensed as a podiatrist requires a shorter period of education and training than some other medical fields. Podiatrists are more in demand than ever. Podiatry is projected to be one of the fastest growing healthcare occupations over the next decade, increasing at a rate double that for all occupations. The increase reflects a demand born largely out of the growing needs of two demographic groups. The US has an aging population that will face increased health challenges that are difficult to avoid, as many are part of the natural aging process. In addition, obesity is on the increase as is diabetes and both of these conditions can be the source of foot and ankle injuries and illnesses. Even the growing number of people today who are actively seeking to stay healthy through vigorous exercise contributes to the need for podiatrists, specifically those podiatrists who specialize in sports medicine. Podiatrists are in demand and the demand is growing, and so is the educational and training system. The profession, its individual members and organizations, are all working toward expanding the already rapid rate of growth. Changes are being made that will create more paths to professional acceptance than have previously been available, and the next few years and beyond should be ones of increasing opportunities for students who wish to become podiatrists.