



Contact:
Mallory Goldberg
MWW Group for Aetrex
646-215-6884
mgoldberg@mww.com

AETREX WORLDWIDE, INC., A LEADER IN COMFORT FOOTWEAR AND ORTHOTICS, NAMES TOP FIVE CELEBRITY FOOT HEALTH OFFENDERS

With the launch of its new “Free Shoes for Life” sweepstakes, Aetrex makes foot health a priority while shining a spotlight on notable foot health offenders

Teaneck, NJ – October 1, 2012 – Three out of four Americans experience serious foot problems in their lifetime, and celebrities are no exception. From Lady Gaga’s heelless platforms to Rihanna’s pointy stilettos, celebrity starlets are consistently making headlines with their extravagant, yet uncomfortable footwear. Aetrex Worldwide, Inc., a global leader in comfort and wellness footwear products, is proving that style does not have to be painful or unhealthy with fashion-forward footwear that combines orthotic support and memory foam cushioning in every style.

With the launch of its new “Free Shoes for Life” sweepstakes – a promotion that awards shoppers with a new pair of stylish and comfortable Aetrex shoes each year for the rest of the winner’s life – Aetrex is giving consumers a new reason to keep foot health top of mind when shopping for new footwear this fall.

“Consumers often look to celebrities for style inspiration, but sky-high stilettos and shoes lacking the proper arch support can cause foot pain and increase the risk of plantar fasciitis and stress fractures,” said Dr. Emily Splichal, board-qualified podiatrist.

Aetrex’s Top Celebrity Foot Health Offenders:

1. [Lady Gaga’s Heelless Platforms](#)

Whether at the Grammy’s or strolling through London’s airport security, this diva loves to rock her heelless platforms. However, platforms place additional stress on the ball of the foot, big toe joint and back of the ankle. Since the feet are the foundation to every step we take, the imbalance caused by wearing heelless platforms will travel proximally to our knees and lower back. This increase in stress can also lead to early knee osteoarthritis and sacroiliac joint pain.

2. [Rihanna’s Sky-High Stilettos](#)

Known for strutting the highest stilettos on the red carpet, she’s “finding (shoe) love” in all the wrong places. Poor shoe decisions can lead to health-related problems such as sprains, low back pain, stress fractures and bunions. Even at 5 inches tall, heels can cause severe health problems, so it’s important for women to stretch the calves and plantar fascia daily, as well as vary the height of the heels to minimize the stress placed on the joints of the foot and ankle.

3. Madonna's Thigh-High Boots

Those thigh-high stiletto boots looked super-fabulous at the Super Bowl, but our favorite Material Girl would be better off dancing in something a little more sensible. Heels place a great deal of extra pressure on a dancer's toes, as all force is transferred to the front of the foot. This increased pressure can lead to discomfort and a painful condition called plantar fasciitis over an extended period of time.

4. Nicki Minaj's Platform Shoes

With those Starships on her feet, it's lucky this platform-obsessed starlet hasn't literally found herself "on the floor." When we say high heels get a lot of attention for being associated with high injury rates, we're talking about these shoes. Very high heels, as fashionable as they may be, are not the best for feet, knees or the lower back. From ankle sprains to hammertoes, high heels have been getting a bad rep for the dangers they cause the joints of the lower body.

5. Beyonce's Maternity Heels

A baby-licious bump couldn't stop this pop-star from flaunting her favorite footwear, including towering pumps and platforms. It might look effortless, but wearing extremely high heels while pregnant does not provide the proper support and foot health our bodies need. During pregnancy, feet feel every ounce, and the added weight gain causes extra strain on arches, causing them to stretch. In addition, a woman's center of gravity is constantly changing, and wearing heels that are not designed properly only increases the risk of tripping or mis-stepping.

"Women have four times as many foot problems as men, and high heels and incorrect shoe sizes are largely to blame," said Splichal. "In order to keep feet healthy year-round, consumers should buy shoes that fit their needs and add orthotics to get the proper arch support, whether their looking for pumps, boots, or casual loafers."

To avoid making the same mistakes as their favorite celebrities, consumers can turn to the iStep®, Aetrex's industry-altering digital foot scanner that accurately measure a person's foot size and identifies arch type and pressure points in less than 30 seconds. Starting today through May 31, 2014, consumers who visit any participating footwear retailer or other establishment, get their foot scanned using Aetrex's iStep and provide their name and email address will be entered into a monthly drawing to win a free pair of shoes for the rest of their life.*

*Winners can choose one pair of shoes, per calendar year, from a variety of fashion forward footwear from Aetrex or Apex, including heels, pumps, boots, clogs, and sneakers. "Free Shoes for Life" is open only to legal residents of the United States (excluding Rhode Island and Puerto Rico) who are at least 18 years old at the time of entry, and participants can enter one time per month. Official rules may be found at www.aetrex.com/freeshoesforlife. No purchase is necessary.

About Aetrex Worldwide, Inc.

Aetrex Worldwide, Inc. is widely recognized as the global leader in comfort and wellness footwear products. With fashion, function and quality at the forefront, Aetrex designs and manufactures therapeutic, casual, dress, sandal and athletic footwear for both men and women. Aetrex also developed iStep, the world's leading digital foot scanning technology, designed to accurately measure feet and determine foot type and pressure points. It is also renowned for its over-the-counter Lynco Orthotics, the world's #1 foot orthotic system. The New Jersey-based corporation was recently named one of New Jersey's Top 100 Privately Held Companies and one of *NJBIZ's* Top 30 Manufacturing Companies. It has remained privately owned by the Schwartz family for three generations. For additional information, please visit www.aetrex.com.

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