Reminder: Guidelines for AFO use
APMA frequently gets questions about appropriate use and clinical indications for coverage of ankle-foot orthoses. Particular confusion seems to exist about CMS coverage of AFOs for offloading diabetic foot ulcerations and fall prevention. CMS guidelines require the AFO be used to support a weak or deformed body member or to restrict or eliminate motion in a diseased or injured part of the body. When an AFO for an ambulatory patient and any related addition is used solely for the treatment of edema and/or for the prevention or treatment of a foot pressure ulcer, it will be denied as non-covered. There appears to be no specific coverage for the use of an ambulatory AFO for fall prevention. Remember appropriate documentation is also required with respect to the requirements of the DME MAC LCD and the National Supplier Clearinghouse. APMA provides more information on guidelines for AFO use online. Information on other coding questions is available on the Coding page of the APMA website.