

Onychomycosis – One of the many Nail Fungus out there

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**By Jeo Leoni**

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Many natural changes in fingers and toenails come with age. Fine ridges, for example, may start developing from the cuticle of the nail tip. This and other similar changes are common, but they are not signs of poor health.

However, there are some nail conditions to watch out for such as small separations of the nail from the nail bed, yellow/brown color, or hardening, crumbling or thickenings of the nail at the top edge. All these conditions are symptoms of a common fungal infection called Onychomycosis, which infects the nail bed under the surface of the nail causing thickening, roughness, discoloration and splitting of the nail.

It can be caused by a somewhat large variety of fungi and it's typically painless for several years after initial infection. But, if left untreated, the condition will worsen and it'll be unbearable to even wear shoes or walk.

Because fungi thrive in darkness, moist areas such as the inside of your shoes, Onychomycosis appears on toenails more often than fingernails. Like mold or mildew, these parasitic organisms live on dead things, which in this case is the dead nail tissue. Once the fungus is established on dead tissue, it excretes toxins into adjacent living tissue causing its death.

As this tissue dies, it provides new ground for the fungus to expand.

The risk of fungus infection of toenails is decreased using the same methods to decrease the risk of fungus infection of the skin on the feet. Here are some tips to maintain your feet dry and healthy:

1. Indoors, avoid wearing shoes and consider wearing open footwear.
2. Change shoes daily. Try alternating between at least 3 pairs of shoes allowing them time to dry out.
3. Change socks whenever they become damp.
4. Wear high top boots only when needed for work or other activities.
5. Treat every foot fungus promptly. Some fungus require daily application of anti-fungal creams to keep them away.

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If the fungus still appears go to your dermatologist to prescribe you both oral and topical treatments for Onychomycosis. Newer, safer and more effective medications are currently available due to nail fungus treatment advancing significantly over the past years. These medications are generally taken for three months. During that time, the medicine incorporates into the nail tissue preventing the fungus to expand. As the nail grows out normally, The diseased nail is displaced and removed.

Article provided by <http://www.nail-fungus.org> , a resource dedicated to providing information on the symptoms, treatment options, and cause of nail fungus.

### **Getting To The Truth About Nail Fungus**

**By Heather Colman**

Nail fungus is something most people know very little about. We may see a few different advertisements or commercials about nail fungus treatment and prevention, but we really do not know what nail fungus actually is. Nail fungus is a fungal infection of the nail also known as onychomycosis in the medical world.

Studies show that while nail fungus is a common occurrence, it will typically infect the toenails. Very seldom will nail fungus attack the fingernails. Further studies show that approximately twelve percent of the U.S. population has some sort of nail fungus and it is typical with age. People aged 40 and older are the most susceptible to nail fungus. Like many other forms of affliction, nail fungus is hereditary; it seems to run in families. Some others may be more susceptible to nail fungus as well such as those who have a suppressed immune system due to certain diseases or treatments. People who have been diagnosed with AIDS, have received transplants, are undergoing cancer treatments are at risk.

In order to determine if you have nail fungus, you must make an appointment with a dermatologist. They will scrape your infected nail and submit it for microscopic examination. The nail will be carefully examined with a microscope and, occasionally, cultured, to determine what type of fungus is growing in the nail. Your dermatologist will determine if you have nail fungus and which type you have. Dermatophytes are nail fungus found in the toenails. Yeast is the type of nail fungus found in the fingernails.

If your dermatologist has diagnosed either type of nail fungus, he or she will prescribe one of many varieties of treatments available to combat the infection. In treatment of nail fungus, there are prescriptions such as gels, creams, and lotions that may be affective in treating mild cases of nail fungus. For particularly harsh cases, your dermatologist may prescribe oral medication to clear the problem. In extreme cases, the doctor may remove the nail, either the section that is infected or the entire nail to assist in treatment of the nail fungus.

The good news about nail fungus is, if you do get it, it can be treated fairly quickly. There are also steps you can take to avoid getting the infection or avoid getting it again. Talk to your dermatologist, he or she will provide you with the necessary information you need about nail fungus and how you can prevent it.

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