



Self-care Information

Fungal Nail Infections

Tips on how you can manage fungal nail infections
“Supporting you to look after you”

- Fungal nail infections usually affect your toenails, but you can sometimes get them on your finger nails too.
- You may have a fungal nail infection if your nail is brittle or crumbly, turns white or yellow or if it is thicker than usual.
- The infection usually starts at the edge of the nail and may spread to all of the nail.
- Keeping your feet clean and dry can help to prevent nail infections.
- Nail infections are not serious, but they can take a long time to treat. If you have diabetes or a weakened immune system it is very important to treat nail infections.
- See your GP if the infection has spread to other nails.

Your community pharmacy can help with fungal nail infections

- Speak to your pharmacist if the look of your nail bothers you or it's painful.



Let your pharmacist know if you take any other medicines, have any health conditions, or you are pregnant or breastfeeding, or buying for a child, as this may affect which treatments you can use safely.

Antifungal nail medicine:

- Your pharmacist may suggest an antifungal nail medicine that you brush onto the affected nail.
- You will need to use it daily or weekly depending on the type.
- It needs to be used for 6 to 12 months.
- It can take several months before you start to see an improvement.
- The treatment may not be suitable if you are under 18, pregnant or breastfeeding.

The infection is cured when you see the healthy nail growing back at the base.

Did you know?

Fungal nail infections can happen when your feet are often warm and damp. Wearing trainers for a long time and having hot, sweaty feet make it more likely that you will get a nail infection.

Here are some things you can do to help stop getting fungal nail infections

- ✓ Treat athlete's foot as soon as possible to avoid it spreading to nails.
- ✓ Keep your nails short.
- ✓ Keep your feet clean and dry.
- ✓ Wear clean socks every day.
- ✓ Wear flip-flops in showers at the gym or pool.
- ✓ Wear shoes that fit well and do not have high heels or narrow toes.
- ✓ Throw out old shoes.



Try not to...

- ✗ Wear shoes for a long time that make your feet feel hot and sweaty.
- ✗ Share towels.
- ✗ Wear other people's shoes.
- ✗ Share nail clippers or scissors.



See a foot specialist (podiatrist) if:

- You have diabetes or a weakened immune system and you get a fungal nail infection. Examples of people with a weakened immune system include those who are having chemotherapy or take certain medicines which can affect the immune system. Left untreated, an infection can cause serious health problems.

See your GP if:

- The infection is severe and treatment from your pharmacy hasn't worked.
- The infection has spread to other nails.

Your GP can prescribe antifungal tablets if you have a fungal nail infection and treatments from a pharmacy have not worked.

Here are some links to further information:

See the NHS website: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/fungal-nail-infection/>

For more advice visit your local pharmacy



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