



NAIL PROBLEM

Discoloration, splitting, abnormal thickening of the finger or toe nails accompanied by pain, inflammation and redness of the area around the finger or toe nails

CAUSES

FUNGAL INFECTION

Also called *onychomycosis*, this type of fungal infection may surface after nails are injured. This type of condition requires a considerable length of time before it is completely healed – up to six months for finger nails and up to a year for toenails. Prescription medication may be necessary.

Symptoms:

- Nail is of a yellowish color.
- Nail is unusually thick and a slight splitting may be observed at the end of the nail.
- Crumbly material is found beneath the nail.

DO:

- Always keep hands and feet clean and completely dry. Moisture encourages growth of fungi.
- When washing dishes or clothes or during any activity which involves handling chemicals, wear cotton-lined latex gloves to protect hands.

DON'T:

- Don't use socks and shoes made of synthetic materials.

NAIL SPLITTING

Since nails are devoid of nerve endings, they generally experience no pain when split. Splitting may be caused by injury or can be hereditary. The condition may improve through time but sometimes does not completely disappear.

Symptoms:

- Cracks along the nails
- Flaking at the edges is also possible.

DO:

- Try putting on a thin layer of clear nail polish on nails to prevent the split from becoming larger.
- Rub hand cream on the skin around the nails to aid healing.

DON'T:

- Don't use nail strengtheners, nail polish removers, artificial nails and cuticle removers often. These chemicals may worsen this condition.



Rubbing hand cream on the skin around the nails can help prevent splitting but too much use of nail strengtheners and nail polish removers may be harmful.



NAIL PROBLEM

Discoloration, splitting, abnormal thickening of the finger or toe nails accompanied by pain, inflammation and redness of the area around the finger or toe nails

PARONYCHIA

Pulling off a hangnail (the bits of skin sometimes found on the skin around the nail) or frequently pushing back the cuticle during a manicure or pedicure can lead to paronychia, an infection caused by yeast, *herpes* or *staphylococcal fungi*. Simple over-the-counter remedies will abate the infection.

Symptoms:

- Red, swollen skin around the nail

DO:

- Soak fingers or feet in warm water. Do this twice a day for five to 10 minutes to diminish swelling.
- If ingrown fingernails are causing the swelling, push skin back with a cotton swab twice daily.
- Apply antibacterial skin cream or 1 percent gentian violet on affected areas.
- Nails should be trimmed every week to avoid growth of bacteria under the nails.

DON'T:

- Don't trim the nails too short – cut them so that they are even with the fingertips or the tips of the toes.
- Do not bite, pick or tear nails and cuticles.

OTHER CAUSES

Other possible causes include nutritional deficiency, psoriasis, thyroid disease, trauma or vascular insufficiency.

NAUSEA OR VOMITING

A queasy feeling in the abdominal area which may induce one to throw up

CAUSES

FOOD POISONING

Food poisoning is caused by eating food contaminated by bacteria, viruses, parasites or toxic chemicals. Common culprits are *Salmonella*, *E.coli*, or *Listeria*. If the nausea or vomiting is severe, medical help must be sought.

Symptoms:

- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
- Stomach cramps which come and go
- Fever and weakness

DO:

- Add a teaspoon of powdered ginger (*salabat*) to half a glass of warm water and take one or two sips every few minutes.
- To prevent dehydration, drink plenty of water but avoid alcohol, coffee, tea, milk or sodas.
- If symptoms persist for more than three days, medical help should be sought.
- Follow proper safety procedures for handling and preparing food.

DON'T:

- Don't eat solid foods. Also avoid extremely spicy, salty, or sugary food. A bland noodle soup is best, especially when the symptoms start to clear up.
- Don't drink alcohol, coffee, tea, milk or soda.