

A Guide for Patients and Families

# Care of Dystrophic Nails



## What is Dystrophic Nail?

Dystrophic nails are toenails that are deformed, thickened and/or discoloured.



**They can appear in the following ways:**



**Thickened  
nails**



**Discoloured  
nails**



**Mis-shaped  
nails**



**Brittle  
nails**

## What causes Dystrophic Nail?

1



Using of certain drugs or substance dependence

2



Prolonged use of chemicals over the nails. (e.g. nail varnish)

3



Poor nail care and trimming techniques

4



Trauma to the toenail(s). This can cause poor nail growth or formation

5



## Fungal nail infection



*Refer to our pamphlet on  
"Fungal nail infection"  
for more details.*

6



Other medical conditions such as thyroid, heart, lung and liver diseases; skin conditions such as psoriasis; micronutrient deficiencies like iron deficiency anaemia

### **Dystrophic Nails:**

You can self-treat thickened toenails by regular filing. If you experience difficulty trimming or managing your thickened nails, consider seeking timely treatment from the podiatrists or trained health care professionals.



## What can I do?



Regular trimming and filing of your nails



Wear good fitting shoes with broad and deep toe box



Apply medication as prescribed



Keep foot clean and dry

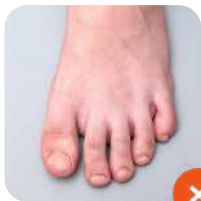
**You can prevent the recurrence by the following measures:**



Do not cut your nails down the edges



Do not attempt to dig and clean under your nails with sharp instruments



Do not pick or peel your nails

## What are the treatments?

- ◆ Treat the underlying cause (medical condition, fungal infection, ill-fitting footwear) until new healthy nail is formed
- ◆ Regular debulking and thinning of the nail which can be achieved by regularly filing by yourself or trained healthcare providers.

## When should I seek medical treatment?

▶ If the dystrophic nail causes pain or shows signs of redness, warmth, swelling or pus discharge, you should seek medical attention immediately.



Contributed by



Copyright © 2023 National Healthcare Group