

FUNGAL NAILS (ONYCHOMYCOSIS):

The most common nail disorder is a fungal infection of the nail called Onychomycosis. Fungus is everywhere including your shoes and socks. Some people get fungal infections and others don't. This is predetermined by genetics as some people can walk through a puddle of fungus and not get the infection and others can walk around the puddle and become infected.

A fungus is a common mold that thrives in dark, warm, moist areas so inside shoes one would expect to find fungus. On the feet, it can grow on the toenails. Fungal problems can be a result of environment (socks, shoes, heat, and humidity) or weakened immunity (diseases such as diabetes). Chronic fungal infections are most common in adults, while acute fungal infections are seen more often in children.

When a fungal infection progresses, it may infect one or more nails, turning them yellow, green, black or other colors. Fungal nail infections can cause nail thickening, inflammation, or sensitivity. The fungus lives under the nail at the root and on the surface in some instances.

The diagnosis of Onychomycosis can be made clinically however a culture may be taken to confirm the presence of fungus.

Treatment consists of doing nothing which will allow the fungus to spread and the nails to thicken and spread to all toenails possibly. Allowing the fungus to persist can cause spreading which can cause complications like ulceration (if the nail gets very thick) and athlete's foot.

The toenail can be removed permanently with a small short in office procedure. The nail will never come back after this and people do well without the toenail.

There is a pill that you can take but it could destroy your liver and people have died from taking the medication. The medication is a safe medication for the most part and monitoring your liver function while taking the pill is mandatory. Blood tests will be done 2 times, at the beginning and in the middle of oral therapy. The therapy requires a pill a day for 3 months, costs about \$1000.00 dollars and takes a year to work.

Finally, the most beneficial method we have found is Tineacide which is a cream that is applied to the toenails that are infected. Tineacide comes in a cream for the toenails and a spray for the shoes. It makes sense to kill the fungus in your shoes as they can serve as a reservoir for infecting your toenails. The Tineacide cream is applied to each infected toenail 2 times a day and the spray is sprayed in the shoes 2 times a day. There is no liver toxicity with Tineacide therefore, no liver testing is needed. You won't have to have blood drawn to use Tineacide and there are no adverse side effects. Most people start off using this medication. The Tineacide usually takes 2-4 weeks to 2-4 months to work. You can start using Tineacide right away and it is affordable, available in our office store and effective.