

## A Comprehensive Guide to Causes, Symptoms, Treatment and Prevention of Fungal Nail Infection

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### DESCRIPTION

Fungal nail infections, also known as onychomycosis or toenail fungus, are a common condition that affects millions of people worldwide. While not usually a serious health concern, fungal nail infections can be unsightly and uncomfortable. In this article, we will explore the causes, symptoms and treatments of fungal nail infections.

### Causes of fungal nail infections

Fungal nail infections are caused by various types of fungi including dermatophytes, yeasts, and molds. These fungi thrive in warm, moist environments, such as locker rooms, swimming pools and showers. They can also be spread by contaminated nail clippers, towels or other personal items.

Certain risk factors increase the likelihood of developing a fungal nail infection, such as:

- Fungal nail infections are more common in older adults.
- Men are more likely to develop fungal nail infections than women.
- People with diabetes, circulation problems or a weakened immune system are more susceptible to fungal nail infections.
- Trauma to the nail, such as from a sports injury or improper pedicure, can make it easier for fungi to enter the nail bed.

### Symptoms of fungal nail infections

Fungal nail infections typically begin as a white or yellow spot on the nail. As the infection spreads, the nail may become thick, discolored and brittle. The nail may also lift off the nail bed and debris may collect underneath the nail. In severe cases, the nail may become deformed or fall off entirely.

Fungal nail infections can be uncomfortable or even painful, particularly when wearing tight shoes or engaging in physical activity. They can also cause self-consciousness, as many people feel embarrassed by the appearance of their infected nails.

### Treatments for fungal nail infections

Fungal nail infections can be difficult to treat and the best course of action may depend on the severity of the infection. Treatment options include:

- These topical creams can be applied directly to the affected nail to kill the fungus. However, they are generally less effective than prescription medications.
- Oral antifungal medications may be prescribed to treat more severe cases of fungal nail infections. These medications may need to be taken for several months to achieve full effectiveness.
- In severe cases, surgical removal of the infected nail may be necessary to allow for the application of antifungal medication directly to the nail bed.
- This non-invasive treatment uses a laser to kill the fungus without harming the surrounding tissue. While still relatively new, laser therapy has shown promising results in the treatment of fungal nail infections.

### Preventing fungal nail infections

There are steps we can take to reduce the risk of developing a fungal nail infection:

- Wash Washing of feet regularly with soap and water and dry them thoroughly after bathing or swimming.
- Shoes that are too tight or too loose can cause nail damage and create an environment that encourages fungal growth.
- These products can be applied to the feet and shoes to prevent fungal growth.
- Avoid sharing nail clippers, towels or other personal items that can spread fungal infections.
- Keep the nails trimmed and avoid biting of nails at the skin around your nails.

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**Received:** 27-Feb-2023, Manuscript No. FGB-23-22524; **Editor assigned:** 02-Mar-2023, Pre QC No. FGB-23-22524 (PQ); **Reviewed:** 17-Mar-2023, QC No. FGB-23-22524; **Revised:** 24-Mar-2023, Manuscript No. FGB-23-22524 (R); **Published:** 31-Mar-2023, DOI: 10.35248/2165-8056.23.13.215

**Citation:** Ping X (2023) A Comprehensive Guide to Causes, Symptoms, Treatment and Prevention of Fungal Nail Infection. Fungal Genom Biol.13:215.

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