



What Your Fingernails are Trying to Tell You - Health Secrets from Your Fingernails

by
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Do your fingernails embarrass or cause you concern?

Judging by the ever growing market for false acrylic nails, it would seem that many people prefer to hide their nails.

Amazingly, the condition of your fingernails can divulge secrets to your general mental and physical health as revealed below.

Beau's Lines

Horizontal indentations in the nails which travel all the way across can indicate diabetes or malnutrition amongst other things. The lines can also be the result of an accident or a previous illness where there was a high fever. Some people find that as the nail grows, the lines will disappear, others will need to wait for the nail to grow out totally.

Clubbing of the Fingertips and Nails

Some conditions such as issues with the liver, heart, lungs or bowels can cause fingertips to grow wider and the nails to curve around them. Named 'clubbing' this condition indicates that a medical check up should be considered.

Discoloured Nails

While most people know that some yellowing of the nails can be caused by cigarette smoking (yet another reason to stop smoking), discolouring can be the result of various medical conditions such as chronic bronchitis, especially when taken in conjunction with other symptoms.

Some respiratory conditions are indicated by all the fingernails being a dull yellow. The nails are often thicker than normal as they tend to grow very slowly.

Fungal infections or lymphedema (swelling of the hands) could also be the culprit.

Nails can take on a variety of colours ranging from red and black due to blood under the nails, to a greenish tinge or even white spots. A doctor's opinion should be sought for any long term discolouration.

Pitted Nails

Fingernails that have small indentations tend to plague people who suffer from psoriasis or dermatitis.

Alternately pitting, taken together with hair loss, could indicate alopecia areata, a condition caused by malfunctioning of the autoimmune system.

Dirty Nails

Nails that constantly have a thick layer of dirt under them show the world that the person to whom they belong really does not have any respect for themselves. Generally dirty nails of this type belong to a person who does not care about their appearance or their health. As such, it could also be a sign of low self esteem and depression.

Nail Biting and Picking

Often shown by nails which are very short, the nail biting and picking habits generally starts in childhood and can often be linked to worry or insecurity. There are many products on the market which claim to help conquer nail biting. Most of these are based upon a nasty tasting liquid which is applied to the nails.

Good hypnotherapy, though, is probably the easiest and most effective treatment for nail biting and picking. As with nail biting, picking the nails causes long term trauma resulting in soft nails which are consequently easier to bite or flake. Often the picker will be unaware that they are doing it. Wearing gloves, when possible, makes indulging in this habit more difficult. Many people grow out of these habits as they reach adulthood, however some cannot manage to do so.

Both habits, when so ingrained, may not respond to the strongest will and desire to stop and external help will probably be required. Effective hypnotherapy can help overcome both of these habits easily and rapidly.

Onycholysis

In appearance onycholysis looks as though the nails, which are opaque, are detaching from the nail bed.

The nails will easily catch on material or other objects. Instigated by injury, infection, thyroid issues or reactions to medication, nail products or even by nails being left to grow too long, this condition tends to be painless, but should be checked out by a doctor to ascertain any treatment needed.

Spoon Nails

This unsightly condition is where the nails grow in a concave manner and the sides appear to be away from the fingertips. It can be caused by an iron deficiency. Taken together with overall tiredness, spoon shaped nails may indicate anaemia. On a lighter note, spoon nails may be the result of a deformity due to injury and can grow out in time.

Split Nails

Split fingernails can be prevented by regular use of moisturiser and use of rubber gloves when doing washing up or using chemicals. Nail polish remover can cause split nails, therefore it is advisable to use it no more than once a week.

Terry's Nails

Nails that have a pearlescent opaque appearance, often combined with a darker area between this and the white tips are known as Terry's Nails. Some health issues can be the cause such as heart and liver problems, however the condition can also be caused by malnutrition or simply old age.

Vertical Ridges

Narrow ridges running vertically from the cuticle to the tip of the nail may indicate a mild dietary deficiency although this can also be the result of hereditary factors.

By paying attention to the condition of your nails and what they are trying to tell you, you can help ensure a long and healthy journey through life.

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