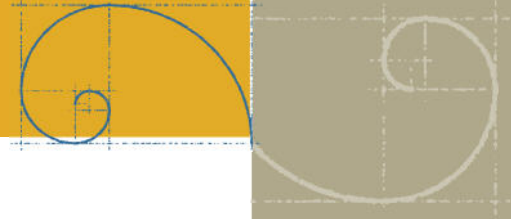


# Fungal Nails



## What is it?

Onychomycosis is a fungal infection of the nail which often causes thickening and discolouration of the nail plate. Often callus (dead skin) is broken down and builds up beneath the nail plate. Sometimes the nail will even change shape. Of all fungal infections that occur on the body, nail infections are most difficult to prevent and treat.

## What causes it?

Onychomycosis is a fungal infection of the nail. Fungi grow in all warm, moist places. The fungus usually commences growth at the end of the nail plate and continues to spread under the nail. Sometimes chalky, white plaques form on the nail surface and as the infection progresses yellowish, brownish discolouration may be seen. Cell damage by the fungus to the foot of the nail can cause the nail to thicken and change shape.

## How is it treated?

Fungal infections of the nail are treated in two ways:

- i. Conservatively
- ii. Surgically

## Conservative treatment involves:

- A visit to the podiatrist for cutting and thinning of the nails;
- - An anti-fungal topical medicament called Gordochoom (available here at the practice) is then used morning and night twice daily. It's applied very much like nail polish. This treatment will help to prevent spreading of the infection to nearby nails and helps to cure the infected nail.

Prevention of reinfection is very important. If this is not carried out, treatment will fail.

If skin has been infected then advice on management of tinea pedis will be needed. Your podiatrist will advise you on this.

Treat the infection that exists in your shoes with Tinaderm spray. Apply Tinaderm spray once a day for the first week and then once weekly.

In most cases conservative treatment successfully alleviates discomfort. However, some cases will require specific oral medication and surgery. Surgery is only considered when conservative treatment fails and oral medication can have nasty side effects. Should the need arise these two options can be discussed with your podiatrist