

Thickened Nails

What are Thickened Nails?

Thickened nails are also known as Onychauxis nails. This is an abnormal thickening of the nail which is quite a common condition. The big toenail is the most commonly affected. Cutting the nail becomes very difficult and pressure from shoes can cause this condition to become painful.



What causes it?

- A major trauma or repeated pressure from shoes on long nails.
- Fungal infection of the nails or skin diseases.
- Poor circulation, particularly in elderly people.
- Psoriasis, eczema and a number of other systematic diseases can affect the toenails.

What will happen if I leave it untreated?

Left untreated thickened nails can start to curl and can turn a yellowy, brown colour.

A professional opinion from a Podiatrist should be sought to ensure that there are no underlying problems which have caused the nails to thicken.

What can help?

- Correctly trimming your nails. Cut them straight across and do not round the corners of the nail.
- Wear good fitting shoes with ample room for toes and nails.
- Try to avoid shoes with a small toe box such as pointed shoes.
- Seek help from a professional such as a Podiatrist if you are experiencing problems with your feet.

What are the treatment options?

It is essential that thickened nails are managed with routine chiropody treatment.

A podiatrist can reduce the thickness of the nails and keep them to a reasonable length.

If the nails have become thickened due to a fungal infection your Podiatrist may recommend the prescription of oral or topical anti-fungal medication.