

This book describes the Nails , their use in the Diseases Diagnosis and Nail diseases such as Psoriasis, Paronychia, In growing Toe Nails, Nail Fungal Infections and other Nail Diseases which are seen in some of my patients in my Family Clinic. The nails are present at the end of each finger tip or toe tip on the dorsal surface. The main function of nail is: 1. Protection 2. A firm grip for holding articles 3. The indispensable one of picking up small things. The normal healthy nail is slight pink in color and the surface is convex from side to side. It consists of 1. A strong relatively flexible keratinous nail plate which starts from the nail matrix. Keratin is the structural material making up the outer layer of human skin. 2. Under the nail plate is a soft tissue called nail bed, the covered part which is embedded in the skin 3. Between the skin and nail plate there is a nail fold or cuticle. 4. The nail wall (paronychium) is the skin covering the root and sides of the nail. 5. The lunula is the white portion at the base of the nails. Since the body of the nail is somewhat transparent the blood shows through and gives it a pinkish hue. The nail plate is the largest component of the nail unit. The nail matrix gives rise to the nail plate. Any defect to the matrix results in onychodystrophy of the growing nail plate. The proximal nail matrix forms the dorsal portion of the nail plate, whereas the distal matrix forms the ventral part of the nail plate. Cells in the stratum germinativum (the growing part of the skin at the base of the nail or the matrix) fuse with cells of the root of the nail and push the older cells away so that the nail appears to be growing. The dead cells of the nail form the horny part of the nail. The nail grows at the rate of one tenth of a milliliter daily for finger nails and about half that rate for the toe nails. As long as the surrounding area of the stratum germinativum or matrix is intact, a nail that is torn off will regenerate. Growth is affected by disease, 1. Nail shedding 2. Nail biting 3. Malnutrition. Nail Diseases: A. Onychia is an inflammation of the nail folds of the nail with formation of pus and shedding of the nail. Onychia results from the infection of microscopic pathogens through small wounds. B. Chronic Nail diseases 1. Fungal Infections a. Candidiasis Candidiasis is a fungal disease of the skin, mucous tissues and nails, caused by fungus from the candidia albicans. Skin candidiasis often affects areas between the fingernails most commonly between the third and the fourth finger in the form of redness, whitish deposits and moistening. Fungal infections on hands are mostly seen in housewives, confectioners and people who often work with their hands submerged in water. A corrugated and brittle nail plate grows due to chronic irritation and infection of the skin around the nail. Treatment is with antifungal cream or oral antifungal b. Onychomycosis Onychomycosis is a fungal infection which affects any part of the nail unit. 2. Paronychia Paronychia is a soft-tissue infection of the space between the nail and the nail fold. It is the most commonly encountered hand infection It is often seen in individuals whose occupation requires frequent contact with water such as bartenders or dish washers. Patients typically describe pain and tenderness. Acute paronychia can result from minor trauma and can lead to infection with Staphylococcus aureus as the most common micro-organism causing the infection. Chronic paronychia occurs after exposure to moist environments and can last 6 weeks or longer, with Candida albicans as the most common etiologic agent. TABLE OF CONTENT Chapter 1 The Nail and Its Diseases Chapter 2 Nails in Disease Diagnosis Chapter 3 Nail Abnormalities Chapter 4 Nail Fungal Infections Chapter 5 In growing Toe Nail Chapter 6 Paronychia Chapter 7 Psoriasis

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