



Thickening Nail

Patient Information

WHAT IS THICKENING NAIL?

Onychauxis refers to an abnormal thickening of the fingernails or toenails without the presence of a fungal infection. The nails may become white, yellow, or discoloured, and can sometimes curl or lift away from the nail bed as the condition progresses.

COMMON CAUSES

- **Aging:** One of the most common causes; nail growth slows and thickens over time
- **Repeated trauma or pressure:** Common in athletes or from tight shoes
- **Underlying medical conditions:**
 - Psoriasis
 - Poor circulation (peripheral vascular disease)
 - Eczema
 - Lichen planus
- **Genetic predisposition**
- **Nail neglect or long-term improper care**

SYMPTOMS

- Increased nail thickness (vertical buildup of the nail plate)
- Discoloration (often white, yellow, or opaque)
- Possible curvature or deformity
- Separation of the nail plate from the nail bed (onycholysis)
- May cause discomfort when wearing shoes or during trimming

TREATMENT

- Regular trimming and filing by a Foot Health Professional to reduce thickness
- Footwear adjustments to relieve pressure on affected nails
- Soaking and softening the nails before trimming
- Medical nail debridement (filing or thinning of the nail by a specialist)
- Monitoring for signs of secondary fungal infection