

Nail Down The Right Treatment



(NAPSA)—Do you know that your nails are indicators of your overall health? Changes in your nails can signal potential health issues. For example, nails that are rounded inward instead of outward can be indicative of an iron deficiency. Pitting and increased thickness of the nail may signify that you have psoriasis. In addition, any yellow or brown discoloration of your nails is typically a sign of a nail fungal infection.

What is nail fungal infection? Physicians refer to this condition as onychomycosis. Onychomycosis happens when fungus gets into the nail bed and continues living there.

Nail fungal infection is a medical condition requiring a physician's care. However, many people still continue to treat it as a cosmetic issue. A recent survey commissioned by Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation and conducted by Roper Public Affairs & Media of NOP World revealed that 25 percent of people 35 years of age and older believe nail fungal infection is a cosmetic issue, not a health problem. In addition, at least 50 percent of adults surveyed who are 35 years of age and older have symptoms of a nail fungal infection and one-third have done nothing about it.

If left untreated, nail fungal infection can lead to serious health problems in some people. Not only can the infection spread to other nails but in people with diabetes, nail fungal infection can lead to severe complications

such as secondary bacterial infections, inflammation of the bone and even loss of the infected bone tissue.

Of continuing concern is the fact that many people use home remedies and over-the-counter (OTCs) antifungal surface treatments to treat their nail infections in the hope that these treatments will take care of the condition. However, not only are these home remedies and OTCs unproven and unapproved for such use, but some home remedies can be harmful.

The American Medical Association (AMA) warns that the use of home remedies can potentially mask or suppress symptoms, which can affect a physician's ability to accurately diagnose and treat an illness once you do seek medical attention. The AMA does not recommend that home remedies be used without scientific evidence supporting their safety and efficacy.

However, it is estimated that Americans spend upwards of \$20 billion each year on unproven medical treatments. Use of unproven treatments can delay necessary medical attention and prolong suffering. According to a study conducted by a panel of dermatologists, if left untreated, nail fungal infection can cause pain and discomfort, which may interfere with social and professional relationships. As the condition progresses it may even lead to absence from work. Findings of the Roper survey support that this condition has a

psychological and emotional impact. Two-thirds (67 percent) of those surveyed with nail fungal infection stated they would be embarrassed if their toenails looked unhealthy to others.

If you have thick, discolored or flaky nails, you should see a doctor for diagnosis and treatment. FDA-approved prescription medications are the only clinically proven treatments for nail fungal infection, which occurs four times more frequently in toenails than in fingernails. One of these is Lamisil Tablets (terbinafine hydrochloride tablets), which is a highly effective oral anti-fungal treatment indicated for mild to severe nail fungal infection. Unlike surface treatments, Lamisil is a pill that works through the bloodstream to target and attack the infection at its source, underneath the nail. More than 15 million patients have been prescribed Lamisil worldwide; it is the most frequently prescribed treatment for nail fungal infections in the world.

Lamisil Tablets have a well-established tolerability and safety profile. They are not for people with liver or kidney problems. Rarely, serious side effects in the liver or serious skin reactions have occurred, so the doctor may do a simple blood test to check for liver problems. Other side effects including headache, diarrhea, indigestion and rash were generally mild.

For information about nail fungal infection and treatment, visit www.lamisil.com or call 1-866-879-4108.