



 Please call 911 if you think you have a medical emergency.

Paronychia Treatment

Self-Care at Home

Care at home includes warm soaks in a mixture of 50% warm water and 50% liquid antibacterial soap 3-4 times daily for about 15 minutes. This soaking should be done at the first sign of redness around the nail.

Medical Treatment

If an abscess (pus pocket) has formed, the recommended treatment is to drain the abscess by doing an incision and drainage procedure.

- Your doctor will most likely use medicine (such as lidocaine) to numb the entire finger first and then will open the abscess using a surgical knife (scalpel).
- Sometimes packing called a wick is placed in the abscess to allow it to continue to drain when you go home and to keep it from closing up and re-forming the abscess. The packing is usually left in for 24-48 hours.
- In extreme cases, infection can move under the fingernail and need partial or complete nail removal. Unless there is an extensive cellulitis (inflammation and infection of the soft tissue around the nail), antibiotics are usually not necessary.
- Your doctor may or may not take a culture of the drainage to check for a bacterial infection.
- After your doctor has drained the paronychia, warm soaks are still recommended. Usually, antibiotics are only prescribed if the infection involves more of the finger than around the nailbed. It is important to follow up with your doctor in 24-48 hours to be sure that the infection is healing properly.

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For more information, read the complete article, Paronychia (Nail Infection) (<http://www.emedicinehealth.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=58765>) on <http://www.emedicinehealth.com>.

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