



**KAISER PERMANENTE®**

## Blood Under a Nail

First of all, to prevent such injuries, be careful around every kind of door—car doors, cabinet doors, refrigerator doors, or anything that can close on your nail. Also, watch before you close doors so you don't hurt someone else by mistake.

When fingernails and toenails are crushed, there may be bleeding under the nail that causes pressure and pain. Happily, most injuries to the nails are not serious and will heal on their own. However, it's a good idea to apply ice as soon as possible after the injury to relieve pain and to reduce swelling. If the pain is still so bad that you can feel a pulse beating under the nail (like a throbbing sensation), follow these three steps:

- 1.) Straighten a paper clip and heat the tip of it in a flame until it's red hot. Then place the hot tip on the nail until it melts through, creating a very small hole. This is not painful because the nail has no nerves. You don't need to push the paper clip, but you may need to place it against the nail several times to make the hole. As soon as you've made a hole, you'll see the blood escape and feel the pain subside.
- 2.) Soak the finger or toe for 10 to 15 minutes, three times a day in a mixture of half hydrogen peroxide and half warm water.
- 3.) If the pressure builds up again and the pain returns after several days, make the hole again in the same place.

You should call your health care professional if you have severe throbbing and don't feel that you can make the hole by yourself or with the help of a friend. You should also call if you develop any signs of infection after two or three days, such as increased pain or swelling, heat or red streaks extending away from the area, discharge or pus, or a fever of 100 degrees or higher.

Many of these injuries cause you to eventually lose the nail. This process is not at all painful, and as the old nail is gradually pushed off, you will see a new nail growing out of the nail bed. Trim the old nail frequently in order to avoid snagging and other problems.



For additional health information you can trust:

- Log on to our members-only Web site at [www.kaiserpermanente.org/california](http://www.kaiserpermanente.org/california), then click the "Kaiser Permanente Members Only" button
- Visit your local Kaiser Permanente Health Education Center

- Check your Kaiser Permanente Healthwise Handbook
- Listen to the Kaiser Permanente Healthphone messages at 1-800-33 ASK ME (1-800-332-7563)

To get your free Handbook and Healthphone Directory, call 1-800-464-4000.

The information presented here is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of professional medical care. If you have persistent health problems or if you have additional questions, please consult with your doctor or other health care professional.

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