

How to care for your fingernails

Kaiser Permanente, Santa Clara Medical Center
Department of Dermatology, #472
710 Lawrence Expressway
Santa Clara, CA 95051
408-851-4650

1. Do not manipulate the cuticle (the part of skin overhanging the nail).
2. Wear gloves for wet work whenever possible to protect the nonliving nail plate.
3. Do not bite or chew on any part of the nail.
4. Moisturize the nails and the cuticle every time the hands are moisturized (use petrolatum or Aquaphor ointment).
5. Do not use the nail as a "tool" to tighten screws, push telephone buttons or other buttons, or write on your Palm Pilot.
6. Trim nails frequently to a short length.
7. Limit the exposure of the nail plate to nail polish remover.
8. Wear nail sculptures only for 3 months consecutively to allow the natural nail plate to repair and regenerate. Remove the artificial nail immediately should onycholysis (splitting of nails) occur.
9. Avoid using any electric drills when grooming nail sculptures. Request the use of hand instruments only for nail grooming.
10. Consider a biotin supplement for fragile nails.