

# Carel's Pharmacy & Compounding Center

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## What is nail fungus?

Nail fungus is made up of tiny organisms called dermatophytes that can infect fingernails and toenails. Nail fungus is very common. More than 35 million people in the United States have it under their nails. A nail fungus infection is also called onychomycosis.

The nail fungus moves in under the nail. The nail provides a safe place for the fungus and protects it while it grows. That's why it's so hard to reach and stop nail fungus.

Most often, nail fungus appears in the toenails. This is because socks and shoes keep the toenails dark, warm, and moist. This is a perfect place for the fungus to grow.

The dermatophytes that make up nail fungus can sometimes spread from one person to another because these organisms can live where the air is often moist and people's feet are bare. This can happen in places like shower stalls, bathrooms, or locker rooms, or it can be passed along when a nail file or clippers are shared with someone who has a nail fungus infection. Nail fungus may also spread from one nail to other nail.

## What treatments are available for nail fungus?

Because the fungus grows slowly, it can be hard to eliminate. Anti-fungal medications are available to combat fungal infections; however, most are strong oral medications that must be taken consistently for months in order to be effective. The medications also have potential side effects to other body organs (especially the liver, skin and/or bone marrow).

The other option is topical treatment that can be applied directly to the infected nail. Using topical treatment, the patient can bypass the undesirable side effects associated with oral medications.

This month's featured compound is **N2 Anti-Fungal Nail Polish**.

**N2** is prescription anti-fungal nail polish used to treat onychomycosis. It is a combination of Miconazole, Clotrimazole, and Ibuprofen in a DMSO base. Tea Tree Oil, which has anti-fungal properties may also be added if desired. It is applied once daily to the affected nail bed(s) until the nail has grown out clean. Penetration into the nail bed is achieved through the use of DMSO. N2 nail polish allows the patient to bypass side effects associated with oral therapy and is extremely cost efficient when compared to oral therapy.

If you have any questions regarding these therapies or any other medication related problems, please call our specially trained compounding pharmacists and staff at (580) 355-4540.