

Paronychia-Finger

What is it?

- **Paronychia Finger** – an infection of the skin around the finger nail
 - **Acute**-caused by bacteria (streptococci or staphylococcus; trauma to the skin as a hand nail, ingrown nail or nail biting
 - **Chronic**- caused by a common yeast like fungus/Candida; repeated irritation as exposure to detergents and water
 - **Fungus/Candida**- the same organism that causes thrush in the mouth and vaginal yeast infection, can also cause skin infections



Symptoms:

- **Symptoms**- painful finger infection, cuticle becomes red and swollen, tender to touch, red, warm, painful swelling of the skin; may have a formation of pus that separates the skin from the nail; lymph nodes in the armpit of elbow may swell, skin around the nail may be boggy, may have a green discoloration due to the pseudomonas infection

Facts:

- **Caused by**- nail biting, finger sucking, a splinter, injury to the area, pus accumulates, the infection can spread deeper into the finger even to the bone
- **Most Common**- hand infection in the United States
- **More Extensive Infections**- diabetes, poor circulation and those with a compromised immune system as AIDS or long term corticosteroid use
- **Prevention**- avoid biting nails and cuticles, avoid soaking hands in water, and avoid sucking fingers



What can I do?

- **See your Health Care Provider**- for more information; an antifungal lotion or cream; a culture of the pus may be taken; a potassium hydroxide/KOH test of a smear from the nail fold can sometimes reveal a virus
 - **Treatment**- warm soaks 3 to 4 times a day to promote drainage and relieve some of the pain, antibiotics, incised and drained, topical antifungal medication with hydrocortisone to reduce inflammation

