

6. Thick, yellow, downright ugly toenails



What it means: A fungal infection may be running rampant below the surface of the nail. *Onychomycosis* can persist painlessly for years. By the time it's visibly unattractive, the infection is advanced and can spread to all toenails and even fingernails.

More clues: The nails may also smell bad and turn dark. People most vulnerable: those with diabetes, circulatory trouble, or immune-deficiency disorders (like rheumatoid arthritis). This condition is also relatively common in older people, and often causes problems walking since, as infected nails grow thicker, they're harder to cut and simply go ignored to the point of pain.

What to do: See a foot specialist or your regular physician for care and treatment. In serious cases, over-the-counter antifungals are usually not as effective as a combination of topical and oral medications and the professional removal of diseased bits. Newer-generation oral antifungal medications tend to have fewer side effects than older ones.