



FUNGAL NAIL INFECTIONS

**6 things you must know
to beat them**

Dr Brenden Brown
Podiatrist

Fungal Nail Infections

6 things you must know to beat them

The invention of the internet has given rise to more ‘experts’ than ever. If “Dr Google” or a friend who’s a bit of a “Facebook Physician” has some advice you’d rather try, please carry on. For those of you who are looking for ‘true’ professional advice—read on...

Fungal nail infection is notoriously hard to beat. It’s highly contagious and often recurring—in most instances due to the fact it was never ‘killed off’ (cured) in the first place!

Its stubborn nature has led people to try all manner of weird and wonderful treatments. As a podiatrist with more than 20 years’ experience I have heard them all. To prevent people from wasting their time and hard-earned money on myths and ‘old wives’ tales that simply don’t work, I have compiled a list of the six of the key reasons why people are failing at addressing their Fungal nail infection, by holding on to rumour rather than facts. We are sharing this information in the hope that we can help thousands more people cure their pain. You **MUST** know these Myths to beat this nasty condition!

I truly hope this helps you on the way to beating your nail infection.

Dr Brenden Brown
Principal Podiatrist
A Step Ahead Foot + Ankle Care

Getting to the bottom why you're not beating fungal nails



1

Tea tree oil will cure your fungal infections – Myth!



Everyone from your great aunt to all the brilliant “Facebook Physicians” will tell you that Tea tree oil is the answer to fungal nail. After 20 years of podiatry I am yet to see a single case cured by Tea tree oil.

The evidence is poor. Mayo clinic rates it “C level evidence” — (yup meaning its pretty bad) “Unclear scientific evidence for this use.” Despite our best efforts we have found no evidence to support its use – We really did search! Further confirming this is the literally HUNDREDS of podiatrists who have tried tea tree oil with no success!

Source: <http://www.mayoclinic.org/drugs-supplements/tea-tree-oil/evidence/hrb-20060086>

2

You need **ONLY** treat the infected nail – Myth!



Every day we have people call us who have been treated for a single toe infection, with little if any result. There is a 100% chance of fungal spores being present in surrounding toes. These “eggs” or spores then hatch, starting a new infection.

This is common knowledge amongst podiatrists so you have to ask yourself “why would any clinic recommend only treating one toe?” hmmm!

“There is a 100% chance of fungal spores being present in surrounding toes.”

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Paints, lacquers, Hydrogen Peroxide and tinctures are the answer - MYTH



Here is the research – the news is not good! Don't shoot the messenger but; National Institutes of Health (USA) reports, "... with the exception of nail lacquer topical solutions, topical treatment of toenail fungal infections usually does not have a significant effect."

The report goes on to suggest in no uncertain terms that hydrogen peroxide does not effectively treat toenail fungus.

Plain and simple, it states, "Creams and other topical medications are usually not effective against nail fungus. This is because nails are too hard for external applications to penetrate."

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A fuller version being

“... Creams and other topical medications are usually not effective against nail fungus. This is because nails are too hard for external applications to penetrate.” As report by the National Institute of Health. (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3040862/>)

In 2007, a Cochrane meta-analysis reported, “there is only sparse evidence of successful management of onychomycosis with topical agents.....Evidence for the management of topical treatments for infections of the toenails is sparser.” (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3666097/#b>)

NOTE: Oral medications – while highly effective, have potential side effects.

PLEASE NOTE: We are not disputing the effectiveness of pharmaceutical products with a clear scientifically rigorous evidence base in treating fungal nail infection.

Source: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3040862/>

“Creams and other topical medications are usually not effective against nail fungus. This is because nails are too hard for external applications to penetrate.”

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Vicks VapoRub, lavender oil, vinegar + Listerine work – MYTH!



Also commonly touted as “Home Remedies”. These “cures” have been reported to work anecdotally, but no large trials have been conducted to prove their effectiveness. VapoRub had a reasonable result, but there were only 18 participants in the trial! Listerine has been tested in petri dishes, but not on people. Tea tree oil was effective on only ONE of the dozens of strains!

If these products truly work on fungal nail infection – WHY haven’t the manufacturers declared their effectiveness and developed money-making off-shoot products?! The argument: “it’s because they already make enough money”. Really? Is that how large multi-national companies roll?

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I had a test with my doctor and it came back negative. So, it can't be a fungal infection – MYTH!



False negatives are quite common. We hear this at least daily!

Our thoughts are:

False negatives are VERY common Why?

A. Testing the nail with freshly applied anti-fungal medicaments (medical substance) will definitely result in a **NEGATIVE RESULT**

Have you been applying paints/creams/lotions? How long since you stopped? Testing a nail with freshly (within last few weeks to a month) applied anti-fungal medicaments will definitely result in a **NEGATIVE RESULT**.

B. Poor Samples—most scrapings are testing dead fungus, therefore **NO** live spores and an unsurprising negative result!

Nail fungus grows from the top and works its way down – If you cut/scrape from the top you are testing dead fungus – Nothing will grow! **NEGATIVE RESULT**.

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Was the scrapping taken from the worst looking bit of nail? If so your GP is testing the dead nail again. NO Nutrients for the fungus to live in so once again = NEGATIVE RESULT.

C. Poor sample storage. Just imagine placing the sample in a clear jar, which is then left in direct sunlight.....UV light kills fungus!

Was the sample taken, popped in a clear jar and placed on a shelf in the sun? Sunlight (UV light) kills fungus. Add to this the wrong temperature and once again you have a NEGATIVE RESULT.

Our clinicians have a university degree in Podiatry, they have seen literally thousands of nails with fungal infections. Our clinicians can also confidently identify nails that look similar but have no infection, for example nails with psoriasis, onychogryphosis and onychiauxis to name a few. We will decline to treat those people who we believe do not have an infection. That's what professionals do!

“Tea tree oil? The evidence is poor. Mayo clinic rates it “C level evidence”—Unclear scientific evidence for this use.”

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Antibiotics will kill the fungal infection – MYTH!



Antibiotics kill bacterial infections—they are powerless against fungal infections (and viruses!). Antibiotics ONLY kill Bacteria. This is a Fungal infection. Taking antibiotics will not cure your fungal infection. If anything, it will leave you more prone to illness as an overuse of antibiotics can disrupt the body’s microbiome. Ie Antibiotics will kill your tummy’s good bacteria, but your fungal infection will only get stronger!

“Antibiotics kill bacterial infections—they are powerless against fungal infections”

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What will you do about your fungal nail infection?

If you're reading this you most likely have a fungal infection. You no doubt realise that fungal nails can be incredibly frustrating. Unfortunately, treatment for this condition is equally as frustrating. It must be said that NO treatment can guarantee success in removing fungal infections in 100% of patients.

Studies have shown that paints, medicaments and ointments are effective in less than 20% of cases. The same must be true for home remedies as due to the inability to penetrate the nail bed, not to mention the extended period of application required—12 months plus!

While oral medications have been found to be highly effective, there are potential side effects, liver function problems being one of them.

Which leads us on to laser!

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Medical Grade Thermal Laser as a therapy for fungal nails

Recently, Class 4 Diode Laser has emerged as a reliable therapy for fungal infections in nails. Medical research has found laser to be more effective than both home remedies and pharmacy-based paints and ointments. Laser also has none of the side effects that oral medication comes with, making it a very attractive alternative.

How does laser work

- Laser treatment passes a beam of laser light at very high spectrum over the infected area.
- Laser heats the inside of the nail + tissue underneath gently raising the temperature to between 45 and 50 degrees.
- Thermal Laser kills both the fungus and its spores or eggs that are in and around the nail.
- This laser is specially calibrated to kill both the fungus and its spores.
- Laser is safe and relatively painless and takes approximately 45 - 60 minutes to treat all 10 toenails.
- No need for anaesthetic or operations. Treatments are performed in specially prepared treatment rooms.

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Is the result guaranteed?

It should be understood before you undertake any medical treatment, that there are no guarantees of success, no matter what the treatment. As practitioners operating in Australia, it is illegal to guarantee a result for a patient. This is for the most part because human bodies all respond differently to medications and treatments.

Medical grade laser is no different. Laser has been shown to be an effective tool in the fight against fungal infections however it will likely NOT result in a 100% clearance rate for all patients.

Laser has been shown to have a clearance rate of between 50% and 80% compared to paints and medicated medicaments at 12.7%.



Nail after medical grade thermal laser treatment. Note the clear healthy nail below the line growing out after treatment.

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Getting the best results!

After using Medical grade laser for many years, and treating thousands of patients, we have found there are several steps you MUST take to lift the clearance rate of laser.

These include;

- Treating all areas fungus hides
- Treating all your nails
- Teaching you how to treat skin, shoes, socks and even your shower!
- We use a systemised approach – that has a history of killing fungal nails in their tracks!

While the laser is highly effective in killing the fungus and its spores, the most common problem is reinfection. As a result, we have implemented the above protocols to help reduce the rate of reinfection and improve the clearance rate.

Following these steps has shown great improvement among our patients. If you are one of the many health practitioners who follow our work we would highly encourage you to implement these protocols as well.

Where to from here?

At A Step Ahead Foot + Ankle Care we recommend medical grade laser as the most effective treatment for fungal nail infection. You can choose to try pharmacy-based medication as a first line option or you can increase the rate of success by trialling medical grade laser therapy.

How can we help?

We would LOVE to help you with your fight against this nasty persistent condition.

After many years as a Podiatrist, Dr Brenden Brown noted that most podiatrists are focused mainly on just cutting toenails! The more difficult and more technical work has become almost an afterthought. Much of the work required more dedication and training, not something everyone was willing to put in.

As a result, Dr Brenden decided that his clinics would focus on key areas and develop staff who had a passion or special skill set so that patients could visit Podiatrists who had special knowledge + interest in a particular area. As a result, the podiatrists at A Step Ahead Foot + Ankle Care are ready to help you fight fungus!



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First steps

Our team of experienced podiatrists see this condition each and every day! This makes us well equipped to help you on your way to beating this condition, just like we have helped thousands of others who have visited our clinic over the last 20 years.

This problem can be frustrating and people are often confused about the best treatment for them. We find it best if you give our front desk team a call to run through what in particular is going on for you, this helps us establish what type of appointment maybe best. We will run through some of the things you have tried, if you've had any success at all.

We can then run through costings and times we have available for the appointment you need. Then we can reserve your appointment time.

Call today on +61 2 9673 2987 (We are open most days from 8am—6pm. Closed weekends.)

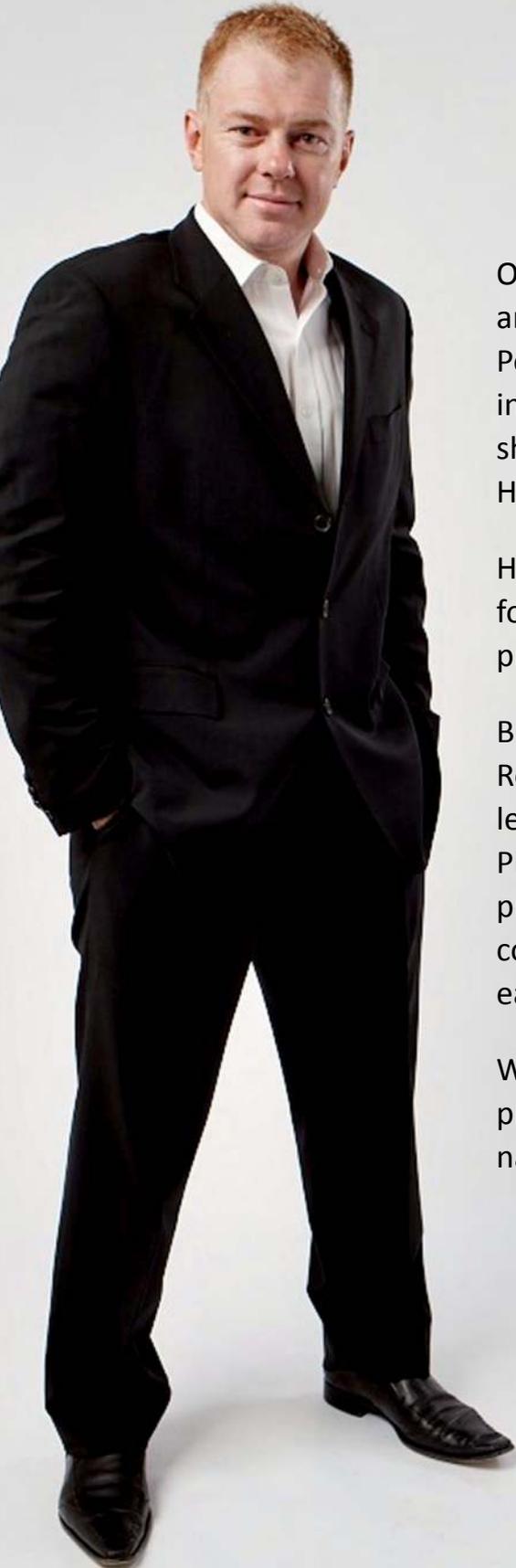
Still uncertain? Most the most of our FREE 10-minute telephone consult

Many patients take advantage of our 10-minute consultation service*, which involves a telephone call with one of our experienced and highly professional team members to discuss your concerns. We can chat about the treatments you've previously tried and offer some insights on the new options that might help you back on track.

**Please note: these consults are strictly limited to particular local areas and to the number of consults available. As you will imagine our team is very busy so we have found the need to limit these. Please enter your details and we will let you know about availability*

Thank you

Thanks for taking the time to read our report. We hope you have found it helpful. We wish you the very best in getting back to being happy, healthy and active!



About Dr Brenden Brown

Our Principal Podiatrist Brenden Brown is recognised as an expert in podiatry. A past President of the Australasian Podiatry Association, he is considered a medical authority in the area of foot health, appearing regularly on television shows like The Today Show and in magazines such as Men's Health.

He has been the go-to specialist on lower limb conditions for ABC radio's The Waiting Room and several other health programs across Australia.

Brenden has more than 20 years' experience as a Board Registered Podiatrist. He has significant experience in lecturing other health professionals including Podiatrists, Physiotherapist and General Practitioners. While he's still practicing, his lecturing, education and other professional commitments means he sees a limited number of patients each month.

While he is still practicing his lecturing, education and other professional commitments means he does not see fungal nail patients, focusing his time on Sport medicine patients.