

In Gastroenterology

Paired, transverse, white nail bands in the second, third, and fourth fingers (Muehrcke's lines) suggest chronic hypoalbuminemia, occurring in more than three quarters of patients with nephrotic syndrome (<2.3 gm/100 mL) but also in liver disease and malnutrition.

Leg swelling without increased central venous pressure (CVP) suggests bilateral venous insufficiency or noncardiac edema (hepatic or renal).

To separate icterus from the brownish color normally present in the bulbar conjunctiva of dark-skinned individuals, ask the patient to look upward. Then inspect the inferior conjunctival recess. This should be entirely white in nonicteric subjects, since the brownish discoloration of these individuals is the result of sunlight exposure.

*Dr. Subrahmanyam Karuturi, MD, FRCP(London), FACP(USA)
Rajahmundry*