

In Dermatology

Drug-Induced Nail Disease



Drug-induced nail disease is diagnosed when a medication affects nail growth or structure. Drugs may cause: nail deformity, nail dystrophy, paronychia, and pigmentation of the nail plate.

Drug-induced nail disease is more common overall in older persons and those exposed to multiple medicines.

The signs and symptoms of drug-induced nail disease depend on the specific drug and are often noticed some weeks or months after the drug has been commenced. Drugs that temporarily interrupt nail growth include Sulfonamides, cloxacillin and other antibiotics.

There is no specific treatment for drug-induced nail disease.

Where possible, the causative drug is stopped; however, it may be continued if the nail symptoms are tolerable, especially, if there is no suitable alternative medication.

- Maintain short nails to reduce trauma
- Minimize immersion in water

Prof. Jayakar Thomas
Dermatologist, Chennai