



Nutritionally Oriented Physical Exam: Hand and Nails

Transcript

Let's move on the hands and nail evaluation.

Before we begin let's make sure that you are aware that any of the information I'm presenting here is not intended to replace a one-on-one relationship with a qualified healthcare professional.

It's also not medical advice and when you are presenting to your clients you need to be really careful and make sure that they are aware that what you are presenting, and what I'm presenting here today, is intended as a sharing of my knowledge, information, clinical research and clinical experience over many years.

I encourage you, and you should encourage your clients, to make their own healthcare decisions based upon your research and in partnership with a qualified healthcare professional. This is especially true for people who are on any medications. I just want to make sure that the things that we talk about in terms of nutrition are not going to interfere with the protocols.

Nail Analysis

The pictures here are pictures of the nails, different kinds of presentations. The first one is to show you the moons, and those are also called the lacunas. The 2nd one is vertical ridging. The third one is spooning, the fourth one is called clubbing, and then finally the 5th one is something called beading and if you look really closely you can see little tiny, what looks like beads running up and down the nail.

We'll look at the exam form and give you a way that you can interpret these. You are not going to memorize all these things right upfront, but I've given you cheat sheets where you have all of the interpretations.

We have you personally look to see each of the nails; do they have moons, are they ridged, is there spooning, is there clubbing and is there beading? Then you have a nice chart to help you.



If they have one nail that looks bad it may not be related to a metabolic imbalance. It may be that they smashed it with a hammer and it just hasn't been growing in properly.

With the moons in Chinese medicine they say you should have moons, good-sized moons, nice like this picture, all the way through to the fourth finger, and then the pinky should not have one. The fourth finger should have a smaller moon than the others but the fifth one should not have one at all. So if you've deviated from that there is a certain meaning associated with that.

Let's have a look at what some of these things mean. If you have large moons at the base of a nail, that's considered good constitutional reserve of energy. You are robust, you've got lots of energy. A smaller one is lower constitutional energy especially when it's many fingers that have smaller moons.

If you have large moons on your little finger, which remember we said that you are not supposed to have moons on your little fingers, then that can be suggestive of heart problems or tendency towards heart problems, especially if you also have those earlobe creases we talked about earlier and a reddish tip of the tongue, remember the tip of the tongue is related to the heart.

Let's go further with our hand and nail evaluation. Splitting of cuticles is usually related to fatty acid imbalance. Well it can also be related to food allergies and also low bile or pancreatic enzymes. In other words poor assimilation of some of the fat soluble nutrients that are necessary to keep the skin very nice and smooth and the cuticles tend to be one of the first ones to show.

When you have rough and flaky cuticles it could be related to B vitamin deficiency or stress. If the nails tend to be break a lot, they split and they break a lot that's often indicative of biotin being low, essential fatty acids being low, deficiency of vitamin B6 or magnesium or stomach acid.

Remember when you have low stomach acid you don't absorb your nutrients as well especially minerals and proteins. If you have excessive vertical ridging, that's usually indicative of low B vitamins and especially vitamin B12, and also poor digestion and gallbladder problems. White spots on your nails can be indicative of low zinc, protein deficiency, but also trauma so if it's just on one or two nails you may want to ask the person if they banged their nails or they work with hammers and other things that might have damaged the nail or the nail bed.



If you've got pitting, little indentations on the bed of the nail that's tendency towards immune problems and also could be low selenium or mal-digestion.

Very pale looking nails, not a lot of blood circulation underneath, or even bluish nails which means definitely bad circulation is often indicative of an iron deficiency.

When you have very deep horizontal ridges, those are also called Beau's lines, they can be indicative of bronchitis, poor digestion, local trauma or adrenal stress. And you've got to differentiate. Being good at differential diagnosis is really important whether you are using standard medical approaches or whether you are using our alternative nutritional functional approaches.

It's really important to be able to distinguish between them, because several things can present with a particular issue; a particular presentation like an issue on the nails or something on the tongue, and it's a matter of pulling all the clues together to determine what you think is the highest priority here, and what might be causing it.

Here is a picture of a clubbed nail. The reason that those nails grow downwards, and the end of the finger noticeably enlarges is because of poor oxygenation, and it can be linked to serious conditions. If you see clubbed nails I would recommend that you get this person to make an appointment with their medical doctor to find out if there is a pathology going on that you may not be able to detect. But this is an early indication and the nails can break in really odd ways.

When the thumbs have ridges but the others don't, it could be kidney stress.

There is a whole bunch more nail assessments here, so let's go through them. Again you've got these, you don't have to memorize them, you've got them here on your sheet of paper, you just need to know how to look for them, and then you can circle or highlight the possible interpretations and then narrow it down for this particular person. We'll show you that when I give you the interpretation sheet.

Remember we've looked at a picture of the beaded nail, especially when the thumb looks like there are beads on a string, it could be arthritis or osteoporosis, something related to the muscular skeletal system. When you have vertical ridges and they split it can be associated with respiratory problems.

If you have very thin parallel lines so they are lines, but they are not necessarily ridges, those can be related to mineral absorption.



If the fingertips are short and the nails are wide that can be poor circulation, kind of like that clubbing picture, that can be circulation issues, and you want to be careful that if there are a lot of clues indicating they have circulation issues, that you make sure that that gets further evaluated.

If you have vertical ridges on other nails besides the thumb, it could be respiratory distress. If your nails are yellowish, they have that jaundice look to them, it could be related to digestion. Horizontal ridges, can be poor nutrition or cardiovascular stress.

Black spots can be related to digestion difficulties. Spooning of the nails, remember that picture where the nails curved upwards and actually looked like a spoon, it can be related to iron deficiency, or some sort of anaemia not necessarily iron deficiency, but most commonly iron deficiency, or lead poisoning.

Hands

If you've got a lot of cracking at the tips of your fingers that can be low zinc. If your hands tend to be cold that can be poor circulation and possibly low thyroid.

Now that we've finished looking at the nails, and we have a sense of what each of these types of nail presentations mean, let's move on.