

Foot Sense

FOOT AND ANKLE CENTER OF LAKE CITY



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No More Scary Fungal Toenails for Halloween

Just because it's Halloween doesn't mean that [scary fungal toenails](#) need to be part of your costume, even if you do plan to go as a witch.

You may be wondering if your discolored nails really are fungus. It's a good question. While fungus is the first thing we think about when we see scary looking nails, they can be caused by trauma such as dropping a heavy object on them or repetitive action such as running.

If you do have fungus it's not something to keep under wraps. Unfortunately most fungal nails won't just sit there. Over time they can get thicker and cause your nails to become distorted and painful. And unfortunately just like warts they can spread to other toenails and family members.

What can you do about it? (over)

Spicy Pumpkin Chili

Get your pumpkin on. Try this new twist on chili.

- 1 pound turkey
- 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes, or to taste
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1/2 large onion, diced
- 1 green bell pepper, chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 1 (15 ounce) can kidney beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 (15 ounce) can black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 (15 ounce) can Great Northern beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 (8 ounce) can tomato sauce
- 1 (4 ounce) can tomato sauce with garlic and onions
- 2 (14.5 ounce) cans petite diced tomatoes
- 1 (14.5 ounce) can fire roasted diced tomatoes
- 1 (15 ounce) can pumpkin puree
- 2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon salt, or to taste



1. Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat; cook and stir the beef in the skillet until crumbly and no longer pink, about 5 minutes. Stir in the red pepper flakes, garlic, and onion; continue cooking until the beef has browned and the onion has softened and turned translucent. Add the green and red bell pepper and cook 5 minutes more.

2. While the beef is cooking, combine the kidney beans, black beans, Great Northern beans, tomato sauce, tomato sauce with garlic and onions, petite diced tomatoes, fire roasted diced tomatoes, and pumpkin puree in a large slow cooker. Season with pumpkin pie spice, chili powder, cumin, and salt. Stir in the ground beef mixture.

3. Cook on low until the chili is hot, 1 to 2 hours.

Get Your Nails Tested for Fungus

If your primary doctor has already verified its fungus then you probably have it. If not a sample of your nail clippings will need to be analyzed. That way we know we're treating the real deal.

How to Prevent Your Toenails from Becoming Witch-like

You can stop your nails from getting worse and distorted by getting your nails treated early. The earlier the better since fungus can be more difficult to treat the longer you have it.

Take Precautions to Prevent Fungal Nails In the First Place

To avoid fungus altogether there are a few things you can do. If your spouse or another family member has it, make sure they get treated to stop the chance of it spreading to you or someone else. Shower rooms and locker rooms are breeding grounds for fungus; always wear flip flops or other foot covering in these situations. Be sure your nail salon is properly sterilizing their tools. Or instead pull out your supplies and give yourself a [DIY pedicure](#).

Don't be Fooled by Folk Treatments Such As Vicks Vapor Rub

Many people ask this [Seattle podiatrist](#) whether Vicks or Listerine can get rid of toenail fungus. These folk remedies have not been shown to be successful. The only treatments proven to work are certain topicals you can purchase over-the-counter or from a pharmacist, oral medications, and laser. Our office uses [comprehensive laser treatment](#) along with orals and topicals to get clearing of nail fungus for our patients. Laser penetrates the nail bed to kill the fungus, orals kill the fungus through the bloodstream, and topicals keep down the fungal load on the outside of the nail and skin surrounding the nail.

Your nails can take nine months or longer to grow out once they get treated. That's why it's important to get your toenails treated now if you're want to wear sandals this summer.

Call us today at 206-368-7000 for an appointment. Often same day for emergencies and less than 2 weeks for chronic foot pain. You can also [request an appointment online](#).

Am I At Risk For Falling?

Problems with balance and falls are one of the biggest issues for my older patients. One out of 3 adults over 65 falls each year and every 15 seconds an older adult is treated in an emergency room for a fall. Because I've heard so many devastating stories about seniors who have fallen, assessing all my patients over 65 for potential fall risk has become an essential part of my podiatry practice.

With the advent of autumn and Seattle rain, it's important to increase awareness of your own risk or that of a loved one to prevent a potential tragedy.

If you're not sure about your risk, answer these questions from CDC, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Circle "Yes" or "No" for each statement below. Add up the number of points for each "yes" answer. If you score 4 points or more, you may be at risk for falling. Discuss this with Dr. Berg or your primary care provider.

Yes (2)	No (0)	I have fallen in the past year.	Yes (1)	No (0)	I have some trouble stepping up onto a curb.
Yes (2)	No (0)	I use or have been advised to use a cane or walker to get around safely.	Yes (1)	No (0)	I often have to rush to the toilet.
Yes (1)	No (0)	Sometimes I feel unsteady when I'm walking.	Yes (1)	No (0)	I have lost some feeling in my feet.
Yes (1)	No (0)	I steady myself by holding onto furniture when walking at home.	Yes (1)	No (0)	I take medicine that sometimes makes me feel light-headed or more tired than usual.
Yes (1)	No (0)	I am worried about falling.	Yes (1)	No (0)	I take medicine to help me sleep or improve my mood.
Yes (1)	No (0)	I need to push with my hands to stand up from a chair.	Yes (1)	No (0)	I often feel sad or depressed.