



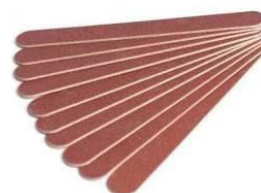
General Toenail Cutting

Patient information factsheet

- Toenail cutting is part of personal care, like having a bath or shower and brushing your teeth.
- It is not usually a medical issue and does not require medical help, unless nails are ingrowing and causing infection, then you should seek help. Speak to your GP if you think you have an infection.
- You may cut your nails yourself, or you may get someone to help you like a friend or family member or carer.

How to cut toenails safely

- To cut toenails safely, you will need some basic equipment which you can buy from a chemist, supermarket or online.
- Nail clippers and emery boards (nail files) like the ones below are cheap to buy and can be used more than once.



- Make sure that you have all the equipment ready and close to you. Get into a comfortable position, with something to rest your foot on, like a stool. Make sure there is good lighting.
- After a bath or shower your feet are clean and the nails are softer to cut, so you might find it easier. If you are not cutting, just filing, then do it before showering when feet are dry.
- Cut nails as straight as possible, only following the natural curve of the end of your toe. Use a nail file to make sure that there are no sharp edges. Downward pressure is best.
- Do not cut down the sides of your nails as you may create a 'spike' of nail which could cause an ingrown toenail. Do not poke down the side with anything sharp, you can use a nail brush/old toothbrush to clear out the sides.



How often should nails be cut?

- Generally, toenails only need to be cut every 3-4 months.
- Don't be tempted to cut nails too short. Shoes should be long enough inside to allow room without catching on the end of the nail.
- Regularly filing the nails will help keep them short so you might not need to cut them at all.

Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

If you have a compliment, complaint or concern please contact our PALS team on 020 7288 5551 or whh-tr.PALS@nhs.net

If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this leaflet please email whh-tr.patient-information@nhs.net. We will try our best to meet your needs.

Whittington Health NHS Trust
 Magdala Avenue, London, N19 5NF
 Phone: 020 7272 3070
www.whittington.nhs.uk
[x.com/WhitHealth](https://twitter.com/WhitHealth)
facebook.com/WhittingtonHealth

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