

Nailbed Injury Repair

Injuries to the fingertips and the nailbed are some of the most common injuries in childhood. When the nailbed is injured, it will regrow if the "bed" that generates it is repaired, similar to a hair regrowing if it is pulled out. The hard part of the nail is the same as the hair, the soft part beneath it is the part that generates the nail.



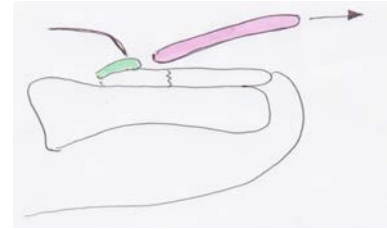
How is my child's nailbed injury repaired?

To repair your child's nailbed the surgeon has removed then replaced the hard part of the nail (nail plate) and used fine dissolving stitches to bring the nailbed underneath it back together.



What should I expect as my child's nail re-grows?

A new nail will regrow from the base of the nailbed underneath the skin over the back of the nail. Usually between weeks 3 and 5, you will notice a rough area starting just beyond the skin over the back of the nail. This will then make its way along and eventually replace the old nail plate. This takes an average of 3 to 4 months. At some point during this regrowth, the new nail plate will push off the old nail plate, which will separate from the finger. This will happen naturally and is expected.



The first nail is usually slightly rough and several cycles of nail growth are required (9-12 months) until the final shiny appearance of the nail returns.

The vast majority of nailbed injuries heal uneventfully and regenerate a normal new nail over 3-4 months. Very rarely, if a lot of scar is generated by the body, the nail plate can lift off the nailbed or generate ridges in the nail as it passes the scar. This cannot be predicted until the nail has regrown. If this happens then you can make another appointment to see your plastic surgeon to discuss the options available.

How to care for your child's finger at home

Your child's finger will be bandaged after the surgery (whole hand in young children). This bandage should be kept **clean** and **dry** until your appointment in the plastic surgery clinic. This is usually between 7 and 14 days after the injury. At this appointment, your child's finger dressing will be removed and a small light dressing or bandaid reapplied. The stitches are dissolving and do not need to be removed. You will be given directions as to how to care for the finger from there.

Tips for keeping bandage clean and dry:

- covering bandage with a sock if using hands/crawling
- cover bandage with a plastic bag when bathing/showering

If your child shows any signs of an infection

- fever
- increasing pain
- redness spreading up the arm
- pus on the dressings

Contact the plastic surgery registrar on **(08) 8161 7000**.



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and endorsed by WCHN consumers