

Q: *The skin on my foot is thickening and my nails are brittle and cracking severely. I believe that I may lose some of my nails if I can't treat them or care for them properly.*

Are there any special tips for foot and nail care for those with CRPS?

taking this vitamin daily for a couple of months. If this fails, there are also some topical nail moisturizers and nail strengtheners that can be applied to the nails. One such product is Elon® Nail Conditioner, available online at <http://www.ilovemynails.com>.

CLINICAL Q&A: Foot and Nail Care for Those with CRPS?

By Elliot Udell, DPM

A: There are many conditions that can cause nails to become brittle and to crack. Two that come to mind immediately are fungal toe nails and vitamin deficiencies, but there are others. CRPS can cause nail problems, since it sometimes affects the circulation in the toes. I recommend that you see a podiatrist and have him or her evaluate the circulation in your toes. The podiatrist can then take a portion of the affected toe nail and send it to a laboratory. We have very sophisticated laboratory techniques today and fungi in nails can be seen through microscopic analyses.

If the test, however, comes back negative, you might want to try taking an over-the-counter vitamin called biotin. One company markets it as Appearex®. Many people suffering from brittle nails report gratifying results after

The bottom line, however, is that if you are having problems with your toe nails, a thorough podiatric examination is a worthwhile investment. Potential problems can often be averted by catching them early, before they become big problems. ■

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- It's called Complex Regional Pain Syndrome.
- CRPS is very painful (imagine putting your hand on a hot burner and not being able to remove it).
- CRPS symptoms can vary from day to day.
- CRPS can cause sensitivity to touch (be cautious about bumping).
- You cannot catch CRPS from another person.

Later that day, I received an e-mail from one of her teachers. After their discussion, she asked her students "Is there anything you can do now to help Alli?" One boy raised his hand and replied "Apologize." From that point on the "Alli's a Faker Club" ceased to exist.

The ultimate goal is to be sure your child's needs are addressed. When parents and school districts work cooperatively, it is the student who benefits. Oftentimes, providing knowledge and awareness about CRPS are the keys to success.

For further information, visit:

US Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/504faq.html>

National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY) <http://www.nichcy.org/idea.htm> ■

RSDSA has published a brochure called *Helping Children/Youth with RSD/CRPS Succeed in School*. You can find it on our website at http://www.rds.org/4/resources/pdf/helping_children.pdf.