

# Leukonychia

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A 72-year old smoker being evaluated for idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis is also complaining for leukonychia observed first 10 years ago. He doesn't recall any injuries to his hands and he hasn't any known nutritional or physiological deficiency.

Leukonychia (or leuconychia) is a medical term for white discoloration appearing on nails. It is derived from the Greek words leuko («white») and onyx («nail»). The most common cause is injury to the base of the nail (the matrix) where the nail is formed.

It is harmless and most commonly caused by minor injuries, occurs most commonly in healthy individuals, and is unrelated to any known nutritional or physiological deficiency.

Illnesses that can lead to white nails include:

Iron deficiency anemia, liver cirrhosis, kidney disease, heart failure, diabetes, zinc deficiency, hyperthyroidism, psoriasis, eczema.



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