



Patient Information

Toenail cutting is part of personal care, like bathing and brushing teeth. It is not usually a medical issue and does not require a medical professional, unless nails are ingrowing and causing infection, then you should seek help.

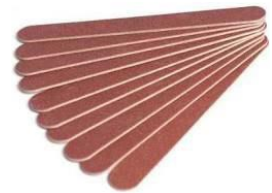
You may be able to do this yourself or you may get someone to help you like a friend or family member or carer. This guide will help with that.

General Nail Cutting

How to cut toenails safely

To cut nails safely, you'll need some basic equipment which you can buy from a chemist 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 close by. Get into a comfortable position, with something in front 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. 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.