

Position statement on the prescribing of topical antifungal nail treatment on prescription

SW London CCGs* do not support the routine prescribing of topical antifungal nail treatment on prescription except in the following circumstances:

- **Treatment is required for a child on specialist advice**

Rationale

- Topical antifungal nail treatments include:
 - Amorolfine 5% nail lacquer (Loceryl[®], Curanail[®], Omicur[®])
 - Tioconazole 28% cutaneous solution (Trosyl[®])
 - Salicylic acid, tannic acid and boric acid paint (Phytex[®])
- There is limited good quality evidence to support the efficacy of topical nail treatments. Of those topical preparations available, amorolfine may be the most effective.¹
- Self-care measures alone (incorporating good nail hygiene) may be appropriate for the majority of asymptomatic patients with fungal infection of the nails, or those who wish to avoid possible adverse effects of systemic treatment.^{1,2}
- Specialist advice should be obtained for children as fungal nail infections are rare in children, and preferred treatments are not licensed.²

References

1. PrescQipp B55 Topical antifungal nail treatment (including patient review letter) <https://www.prescqipp.info/-amorolfine-5-nail-lacquer/category/63-amorolfine-5-nail-lacquer>
2. NICE Clinical Knowledge Summaries Fungal nail infection (accessed 01/03/17) <https://cks.nice.org.uk/fungal-nail-infection>
3. PrescQipp Self Care webkit <https://www.prescqipp.info/resources/category/141-self-care-webkit>

Guidance for clinicians

Recommendations:

- Advise patients of safe and effective self-care measures (incorporating good nail hygiene) for the majority of asymptomatic patients with fungal infection of the nails. ¹
- If a decision is made to initiate treatment, systemic therapy is usually more successful than topical treatment in dermatophyte onychomycosis. ^{1,2}
- Topical therapy should only be considered if the infection is mild and superficial or where systemic therapy is contra-indicated or not tolerated e.g. hepatic or renal impairment. In these cases, patients should be advised to purchase over-the-counter amorolfine 5% nail lacquer for the treatment of a maximum of 2 nails. ¹
- Topical treatment should be continued for 6 months for fingernail infections and for 9 to 12 months for toenail infections. ²
- For clinical advice and guidance on managing these conditions, contact your local podiatry service.

Guidance for patients, carers and guardians

- Community pharmacists can offer advice on how to manage your nail infection, when to seek medical advice, and what to take if you are on other medication. You do not need to make an appointment to see the pharmacist, and many pharmacies are open late nights and at the weekend when the doctor's surgery is closed. ³
- Evidence suggests there is little benefit from using fungal nail treatments and self-care measures can be used. ¹
- You can avoid or reduce the risk of fungal nail infections by: ^{1,2}
 - Avoiding prolonged or frequent exposure to warm, damp conditions
 - Avoid damaging the nails
 - Avoid occlusive footwear
 - Keep nails trimmed short and filed down
- For toenail infections: ^{1,2}
 - Wear well-fitting footwear without high heels or narrow toes
 - Maintain good foot hygiene including treating any athlete's foot
 - Wear clean shower shoes when using a communal shower
 - Maintain hygiene of affected feet
 - Consider seeking treatment from a podiatrist if thickened toenails cause discomfort when walking
- Fungal nail treatments can be purchased from a community pharmacy if you wish to use them for your nail infection.
- Speak to your doctor if you have used topical treatment for 6 months for fingernail infections and 9 to 12 months for toenail infections without success. ²

For further information see:

- NHS Choices Fungal nail infection - includes information on symptoms, causes, treatment and prevention <http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Fungal-nail-infection/Pages/Introduction.aspx>
- NHS Choices Treatments for a fungal nail infection - includes self-care advice and treatment <http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Fungal-nail-infection/Pages/Treatment.aspx>

The NHS belongs to YOU, use it responsibly