

How to Take Care of Your Skin and Nails

For congenital heart patients

This section of the Congenital Heart Conditions notebook explains basic ways to protect your skin and nails from infection.

Your skin is a “barrier” against infections that can be serious, such as *endocarditis*. Your skin is an especially important barrier if you have congenital heart disease.

Protect Your Skin

Avoid doing anything that can break your skin “barrier”:

- Do not pick at cuticles, scabs, or pimples.
- Talk with your cardiologist before you get a tattoo, body piercing, or *electrolysis* (a procedure that uses an electric current to remove hair).

Tell Your Doctor

Tell your doctor if you have any signs of skin or nail infections, such as:

- Redness
- Swelling
- Discharge



Taking good care of your skin and nails is an important part of self-care when you have a congenital heart condition.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns.

Regional Heart Center
Adult Congenital Heart
Disease Program:
206-598-1764