



that's disgusting // ACRYLIC NAILS

dude. gross.

Those fancy acrylic nails you just got might look pretty, but what's underneath them isn't so nice.

Wearing acrylic nails makes you more susceptible to catching a nail fungus, says Kendra Robinson, nail technician at Salon di Marco, 733 Massachusetts St.

If you wait longer than the recommended one to two weeks before getting your acrylic nails filled in, the acrylic will start to lift off the natural nail bed. When this happens, moisture from washing your hands and dirt gets stuck under the acrylic nail. Filling in the nail then traps that dirt and moisture under the acrylic, providing a breeding ground for bacteria. Plus, you won't be able to tell if you have a nail fungus because you can't see it, Robinson says.

Even if you don't have a nail fungus, your natural nail under the acrylic is still a scary sight. In order to attach acrylic nails, the natural nails get filed down, making them thin and brittle. This not only makes it more difficult to grow strong natural nails, but also makes them easier to rip off. Meaning if the acrylic nail starts to rip, it's probably taking



Photo illustration by Kirsten Hudson

Grow your own: Acrylic nails can trap moisture and dirt, providing a breeding ground for bacteria.

your natural nail along with it. Ouch!

If you want to remove your acrylic nails yourself, don't just grit your teeth and rip. Robinson recommends first buffing the acrylic nails down to thin them out. Then dip cotton balls in acetone, place one on each nail and wrap them in foil to hold them in place. Let the acetone soak into the nail for a few minutes then remove the foil and cotton balls. If the acrylic nail doesn't peel off easily, use a cuticle pusher to gently pick at the nail and remove it.

To keep sensitive, post-acrylic nails strong, use a clear, strengthening nail polish and consider keeping your nails *au naturale* from now on.

// KIRSTEN HUDSON