



Grant Gonzalez, DPM

A Cosmetic Alternative for Ugly Toenails

By Grant Gonzalez, DPM, Foot & Ankle Center of Illinois/Illinois Laser Center



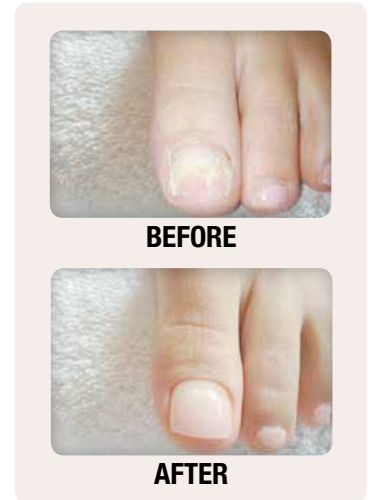
For the past couple of years, I have been following the “I Hate Feet Group” on Facebook. This group claims that most men love their feet and most women seem to hate their feet. Overall, I would agree that women appear to be more concerned with the appearance of their feet than men; however, both are equally concerned, and embarrassed, if they have infected or deformed toenails. I am constantly receiving apologies from patients with impairments such as Onychomycosis (toenail fungus), nail shape changes due to injury, spoon-shaped nails, horizontal ridges, brittle and splitting nails, split nails, and discolored nails.

Unfortunately, these conditions not only present a physical problem. Often, there is a social stigma toward individuals who have ugly toenails that leads to psychological problems. As summer approaches, many people will avoid wearing open-toe shoes, sandals, and flip flops so they will not be noticed. Some individuals will even stop participating in social and recreational events, or hide their feet because they are self-conscious and embarrassed about the way their toenails look. Distress can be quite extreme and their quality of life can diminish. Regardless of age or gender, no one enjoys having ugly toenails!

“The good news is that podiatrists have an arsenal of treatments to restore nails to their natural appearance.”

The good news is that podiatrists have an arsenal of treatments to restore nails to their natural appearance. In 2013, *Podiatry Today* recognized the KeryFlex nail restoration system as one of the top ten innovations in podiatry. This system repairs toenails damaged by fungus, injuries, and most deformities, and it restores nails to their original appearance. In some instances, treatment can be given on a regular basis, just like getting a pedicure. When used in conjunction with antifungal nail lacquers, topical solutions, oral medications, or laser treatments, KeryFlex treatments are stopped when the new nail clears. In other instances where there is permanent damage to the nails, KeryFlex treatments may be scheduled on a regular basis.

The KeryFlex nail restoration system uses polymer resins and special activators that bond to damaged toenails to create a durable, yet flexible natural-looking nail when exposed to a certain frequency of ultraviolet light. The procedure takes around 30 to 60 minutes. Most of the damaged nail is removed and a bonding agent is applied to the nail. The KeryFlex gel is available in three colors: opaque, clear, and natural. Patients are able to get a pedicure or apply nail polish. Patients are thrilled with the results. Most importantly, they are able to immediately resume normal activities without the stigma and embarrassment associated with ugly toenails.



The Foot & Ankle Center of Illinois is the first podiatry clinic in Springfield and Decatur to offer KeryFlex treatments and laser treatments for toenail fungus. To learn more about these exciting treatments visit myfootandanklecenter.com, or call 217-787-2700 to schedule an appointment.

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