

Patient Education Handout: Subungual Hematoma

- A subungual hematoma is a collection of blood between the nail and your finger or toe.
- Subungual hematomas are commonly caused by an injury to the tip of the finger or the nail.
- The pain and pressure are relieved quickly by making a hole on the nail to release the blood. This is called trephination.
- Trephination is not required if you do not have any pain.
- Avoid soaking the finger or toe and keep it dry for 48 hours, then clean with soap and warm water.
- Keep the digit elevated above the level of the heart to prevent pain and throbbing.
- The nail may fall off in the days after the blood has been drained.
- Watch for signs and symptoms of infection (pus, fever, increased pain and redness, red streaks near the wound, increased swelling) and return to the clinic or seek care from another health care provider.

