

Hints and tips for cutting nails

General Tips:

- > Soak your nails before you cut them to help make them soft, but only for a maximum of 5 minutes as the skin around the nails can get too soft. This is especially helpful if your nails are particularly tough or thick.
- > If you cannot support your hand or arms when cutting your nails then try to rest them on the arms of a chair or another similar flat surface.
- > To support your foot whilst cutting your toe nails try to rest it on a small footstool or sit on a bed with your leg up to cut your nails.
- > If you are sitting in a chair bring your foot towards you rather than leaning forward when cutting your toe nails. This is especially important if you have a breathing/heart condition or if you have difficulty maintaining your balance.
- > Long handled toe nail scissors should be used with care as you do not have as much control over them as a small pair of nail scissors.
- > Using a toe separator may make it easier to cut your toe nails.
- > As an alternative to cutting your nails you could use a nail file. However, if you choose to do this it is best to use it often and not to let nails get too long before filing them.

- > Only cut toe nails straight across in a straight line (i.e. don't make the corners rounded) as if you cut them curved it can cause in-growing toe nails.
- > If you are on any blood thinning drugs you must be very careful not to cut yourself as the bleeding may not stop quickly.
- > If you have a tremor and you take medication to control it, then wait to cut your nails until after the medication has taken effect.

If you still cannot manage to cut your nails having tried the recommended solutions you **MUST** see a Chiropodist. You may also need to see a Chiropodist if you have been advised to do so to have your nails cut, for example because you are a diabetic. To find a state registered one near you please look on www.nhs.uk. Alternatively, you can contact your Local Authority or Primary Care Trust to find out whether treatment may be available to you free of charge, which might be the case if you are over 65.