



# University Hospital Galway

EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT  
GalwayEM.ie

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## **Hand Infections**

**(<https://galwayem.ie/guidelines/trauma-and-musculoskeletal/hand-infections>)**

Category

[Trauma and Musculoskeletal \(https://galwayem.ie/guidelines/trauma-and-musculoskeletal\)](https://galwayem.ie/guidelines/trauma-and-musculoskeletal)

### **Acute paronychia**

Usually staph. aureus

- Ask advice
- Pus confined to nail fold; I & D under ring block.
- Pus under nail; remove wedge of nail or whole nail under ring block.
- Antibiotics are rarely needed.

### **Chronic paronychia**

Usually candida infection.

- Treat with antifungal cream rubbed into nail fold tds and every time patient gets hands wet.

### **Pulp space abscess**

Usually staph. aureus

- If severe, X-ray to exclude osteomyelitis
- I & D over most tender spot, (mark before injecting L.A.)
- Antibiotics rarely needed

**Severe infections** eg tendon sheath infections, palmar space infections, severe cellulitis

- Refer to Hand Surgery service for iv antibiotics +/- exploration

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