

How to have healthy and soft cuticles?



How many times do we get our nails done a month? I usually get a mani and pedi every 2 weeks almost. Sometimes I go back to the salon looking like I've never had a manicure in my life, it can be embarrassing! I realized that it all depends on how my skin is, if I'm not drinking enough water I tend to have a lot of dead skin that we usually mistake as cuticles.

One of my main concerns when getting my nails done is my cuticles. You never know if you should totally remove them or let them as they are and eventually they'll look decent. I've read so many things about whether or not I should remove or keep my cuticles. Honestly, removing them looks way better and cleaner, but you're also risking getting an infection.



Cuticles don't want to be cut, they're supposed to be soft, and by cutting them they'll more likely become dry and rough, which then makes us remove them over and over again, and it just becomes an addiction to get what we think is the "clean" look.

Here are a few things that you can do to make sure you have healthy, soft cuticles:

1. First, stop cutting them. They might seem off for a while but then they grow out and settle in to the shape of your nails.
2. Make sure you wash your hands regularly, when you cut your cuticles you are more likely to get a bacterial infection due to any open wound, and it will also slow down nail growth.

3. Moisturize the skin around your nails. I always used the Essie Apricot Cuticle Oil. I can swear by this oil, it helped my cuticles to become smooth and soft, as well as helped my nails grow faster.

4. Avoid manicurists that are rough with their work, with that I meant don't go for the lady who's willing to rip off the skin around your nails and call it a day. You should always explain to your manicurist that you want your cuticles pushed back and not removed, because usually aggressive cleaning will cause redness, wounds and eventually may cause having an infection.

5. Avoid having dry skin by not using much nail polish removers or harsh soaps. These products will dry out your skin and result in rough cuticles.

6. Never put your hand in your mouth, if you're a person that bites their nails or the skin around you, you should definitely read up about ways how to quit this habit. Your mouth contains saliva and your saliva contains bacteria, which will eventually cause an infection too.

7. Massaging warm olive oil on your nails every night will help you moisturize your skin as well as provide your skin and nails with Vitamin E.

8. Give your nails a breather! If you're the type of girl that loves nail polish make sure you give your nails a few days off a week to breathe in the oxygen, the nail polish tends to cut off the oxygen to your nails and with time it causes your nails to turn a bit yellow and weak. Not cute.

Your nails say a lot about you, it's feminine to have clean and pretty nails. It's a part of your beauty regimen to have healthy nails first and foremost before worrying about growing them. The most appropriate and classy growth of nails is a bit longer than your skin.

Sometimes having really long nails can be uncomfortable and hard to keep clean, that is why having shorter nails look and feels good. Try not neglecting taking care of your nails because with time your nails tend to become weak and fragile, which can also result in nails being so unhealthy they won't grow in length. At this point girls always go for nails extension which will further more harm your nails by blocking off oxygen then eventually cause discoloration and breakage.

Muslim pilgrims join one of the Hajj rituals on Mount Arafat near Makkah.



Biscuits for some, buffets for others at hajj

They may be equal before God inside Makkah's Grand Mosque, but the rich and poor pilgrims at the annual hajj clearly reveal their differences just beyond the gates. Outside the southern end of the sprawling compound lies a temple to consumerism. Several high-end hotels, malls and restaurants are found inside the six towers of the gargantuan Abraj Al-Bait complex. It includes the Mecca Royal Clock Tower, the world's third-highest building which rises behind the mosque. In contrast, beyond the eastern entrance of Islam's holiest site, water drips from air conditioners, garbage is piled beside the roads, and a stench fills the air.

Elderly vendors in tiny shops shout the prices of their simple goods—from traditional miswak (a teeth-cleaning twig) to prayer rugs, wooden rosaries and plastic slippers. "Here it's cheaper," says 60-year-old shop owner Abu Mohammed. "The poorer people come to buy from here because in the other district the shops are more sophisticated and for people who have more money," he tells AFP. Saudi Arabia's social security department has opened the small retail outlets to help elderly local men try to make a living.

'High-class pilgrims'

Back in the air-conditioned Abraj Al-Bait complex, elevators swiftly rise and descend, and cutlery gently clinks. Pleasantly smiling staff and security men make sure pilgrims find their way around polished lobbies. "Our guests are generally the high-class and well-to-do pilgrims who are willing to pay more in return for comfort," says an employee at one of the hotels, requesting anonymity. The hotel charges an average of



about \$1,000 a night during hajj season, with a seven-night minimum, according to another employee.

Many of the rooms overlook the Grand Mosque's holy Kaaba, a cube-shaped structure towards which Muslims around the world pray. Yasser Riad, a guest at one of the hotels who came with his wife from Egypt, says they paid around \$5,000 each for the whole trip. "We try to be close to the Grand Mosque so we can save time for prayer," says the 45-year-old lawyer. The couple shop at the mall connected to their hotel "because it's usually too hot outside."

Biscuits and beans

For Um Hani, a 55-year-old pilgrim dragging her feet as she sweats under the heat of the eastern district, this is unimaginable luxury. "The

shops there are expensive. These open-air markets here are cheaper," she says. Um Hani could not have even made it to the hajj had her name not been randomly selected in the Egyptian government's annual electronic lottery to perform the pilgrimage. She is satisfied with the free "biscuits, tuna, beans, and juice" the pilgrims are offered at her shabby high rise hostel, typical of the accommodation for poorer hajjis. Biscuits for some. Buffets for others.

But rich and poor all wear the same ihram clothes for hajj—a seamless white two-piece garment for men and any loose dress, typically white, for women. No matter which gate they enter from, the pilgrims gather side-by-side for prayer at the crowded mosque and leave together for the nearby tent-city of Mina to begin the hajj. — AFP

Japan's 'Golden Bolt' stuns medical science to set world record



Hidekichi Miyazaki (back center), 105, runs with other competitors over eighty years of age during a 100-metre-dash.

A fleet-footed Japanese centenarian raced into the Guinness World Records reference book yesterday and declared himself a "medical marvel" as he continues to stalk sprint king Usain Bolt. Hidekichi Miyazaki, dubbed "Golden Bolt" after the fastest man on the planet, clocked 42.22 seconds in Kyoto to set a 100 meters world record in the over-105 age category—one for which no mark previously existed a day after reaching the milestone age.

"I'm not happy with the time," the pint-sized Miyazaki told AFP in an interview after recovering his wind. "I started shedding tears during the race because I was going so slowly. Perhaps I'm getting old!" Indeed, so leisurely was his pace that Bolt could have run his world record of 9.58 four times, or practically completed a 400 meters race—a fact not lost on Miyazaki.

"I'm still a beginner, you know," he said, grinning from ear to ear. "I'll have to train

harder. Training was going splendidly, so I had set myself a target of 35 seconds. I can still go faster." "I will say this: I'm proud of my health," added Miyazaki, the poster boy for Japan's turbo-charged geriatrics in a country with one of the world's highest life expectancies.

"The doctors gave me a medical examination a couple of days ago and I'm fit as a fiddle. "My brain might not be the sharpest but physically I'm tip-top. I've never had any health problems. The doctors are amazed by me. I can definitely keep on running for another two or three years."

Dressed in his trademark red, tight shorts hiked alarmingly high, Miyazaki got off to a wobbly start before finding a gentle rhythm and trotting across the finish line to loud cheers, greeted by his great-grandchildren carrying bouquets. Cheekily, he celebrated by striking Bolt's famous "lightning" pose

before being presented with a certificate from Guinness officials.

Dream race

Asked about Bolt's latest heroics at last month's athletics world championships in Beijing, Miyazaki screwed up his nose and said with a chuckle: "He hasn't raced me yet!" The twinkle-toed Miyazaki, who holds the 100 meters world record for centenarians at 29.83 seconds, insisted there was still time for a dream race against the giant Jamaican. "I would still love to compete against him," said Miyazaki, who loses valuable seconds because he cannot hear the starter's gun go off. "Two or three years ago Bolt came to Japan and said he wanted to meet me. There was a call about it but I was out and he left without meeting me. I felt deeply sorry."

Miyazaki, who was born in 1910 — the year Japan annexed Korea and when the Titanic was



Hidekichi Miyazaki, 105, is congratulated by family members after running with other competitors over eighty years of age during a 100-metre-dash in the Kyoto Masters Autumn Competition.



Hidekichi Miyazaki (center, in red), 105, speaks to the press after running with other competitors.



Hidekichi Miyazaki, 105, throws a shot put after running with other competitors.

still being built—only took up running in his early 90s and prepares for races by taking a sneaky catnap. He stands just 1.53 meters (five feet) tall and weighs in at 42 kilograms (92 pounds). He trains religiously by popping a kilogram weight into a rucksack and going for daily walks around his local park in Kyoto, where he now lives.

"It's all about willpower," Miyazaki said of his need for speed. "You have to keep going." Japanese television crews jostled as Miyazaki, a native of tea-growing Shizuoka prefecture, arrived for his record tilt sporting dapper white slacks and a Panama hat. Job done on the track, the Japanese iron man proved he was a dab hand at the shot put, tossing a best effort of 3.25 meters before calling it a day. "I can't think about retiring," said Miyazaki, whose next competition is next month's Japanese Masters Championships. "I have to continue for a few more years, to show my gratitude to my fans." — AFP