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Generalized Acquired Onychogryphosis Involving All Twenty Nails

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Citation Saluja A, Maheshwari K. Generalized Acquired Onychogryphosis Involving All Twenty Nails. Case Reports in Clinical Practice. 2026; 11(4): 207-209. DOI: 10.18502/crcp.v11i4.23138

Running Title Twenty Nail Onychogryphosis

Article info:
Received: July 26, 2026
Revised: August 18, 2026
Accepted: August 29, 2026

Keywords:
Hypertrophic nail, Nail deformity, Onychogryphosis, Twenty nail dystrophy

Case Summary

Onychogryphosis is a disorder of nail plate growth characterized by an opaque, yellow-brown discoloration, marked thickening, elongation, and increased curvature of the nail plate associated with hyperkeratosis. It is often characterized as "ram's horn" or "oyster-like" in appearance [1]. It may be congenital, inherited in an autosomal dominant pattern, involving all twenty nails, or acquired, usually associated with neglect, trauma, or impaired self-care. This deformity occurs because of two proposed mechanisms: insufficient nail matrix beneath the posterior fold to exert a flattening effect on the nail plate, or excessive keratin production by the nail bed. Although the great toenail is most often affected, the fingernail may be involved in rare cases [2].

The authors report a case of an elderly female who presented with progressive thickening, elongation, yellow-brown discoloration, and marked curvature of all fingernails and toenails over several years. She was malnourished, socially isolated, and had poor self-care. Examination revealed significant hypertrophy of all twenty nails with exaggerated transverse and longitudinal curvature, producing characteristic ram's horn-like deformities (Figure 1a, b). Several nails showed distal tapering with claw-like projections and subungual hyperkeratosis. Onychoscopy revealed nail plate hyperkeratosis, brownish-yellow discoloration, longitudinal or transverse ridges and grooves with loss of normal nail plate architecture, and dense subungual keratotic debris (Figure 2a, b). The patient reported difficulty performing household activities and discomfort while wearing footwear. There was no history of psoriasis, peripheral vascular disease, trauma, or systemic illness. Mucocutaneous examination was unremarkable. A clinical diagnosis of generalized onychogryphosis was made.

Treatment options include conservative management, nail avulsion with or without matricectomy, V-Y advancement flap, or the Syme technique [3]. In this case, simultaneous extensive involvement of all fingernails and toenails is uncommon and presents a

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Fig. 1. Clinical photographs demonstrating generalized acquired onychogryphosis involving all twenty nails. a) Hands showing marked hypertrophy, elongation, and excessive curvature of the fingernails. b) Feet showing severe dystrophic overgrowth with subungual hyperkeratosis and ram's horn-like deformity of the toenails.

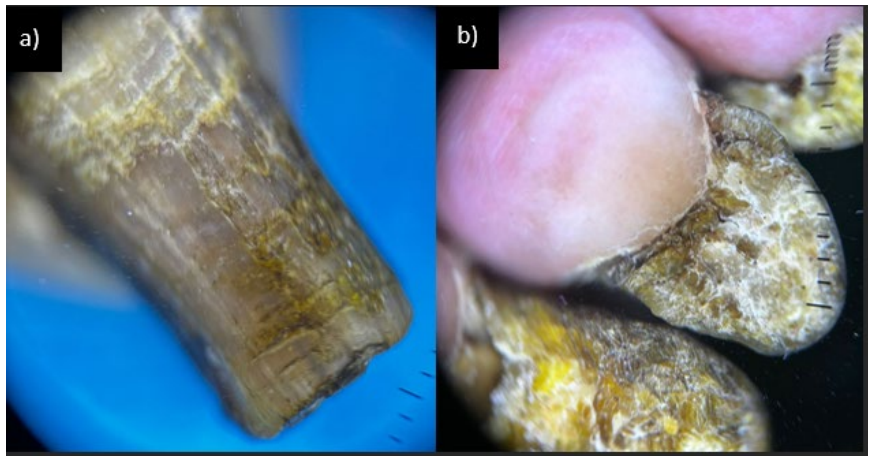


Fig. 2. Onychoscopy of generalized acquired onychogryphosis. (a) Diffuse xanthonychia with marked longitudinal ridging and loss of normal nail plate architecture. (b) Compact subungual hyperkeratosis with severe nail plate hypertrophy and dystrophic overgrowth.

striking clinical appearance, emphasizing the need for prompt evaluation and management.

Ethical Considerations

Compliance with ethical guidelines

There were no ethical considerations to be considered in this article.

Funding

No funding was received to assist with the preparation of this manuscript.

Conflict of Interests

The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

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