



Chapter 7

Nails: Armor of Our Nervous System

Nails are the thin horny covering that grows on the upper surface of the end of each finger (Fig. 163). The actual fingernail is referred to as the nail plate. It is made of translucent keratin*. The pink appearance of the nail comes from the blood vessels underneath the nail. The underneath surface of the nail plate has grooves along the length of the nail that help anchor it to the nail bed.

Nails are nature's way of protecting the sensitive nerve endings in the fingertips. Vedic palmistry refers to the nails as the shield or armor of the human brain and nervous system. Acting in the capacity of armor, the nails help insulate us so that we can remain calm in day-to-day encounters.

The nails act as our interface with the world. A study of the nails reveals the degree to which the brain and the nervous system are protected. For example, small or bitten nails remove the nerves' protective covering, just as stripped insulation leaves exposed live wires.



Figure 152. Nails are the thin horny covering that grows on the upper surface of the end of each finger.

* A fibrous insoluble protein that is the main structural element in hair, nails, feathers, and hooves.

The shape and formation of the nails show our physical, psychological and spiritual nature.

Each nail is measured from the cuticle to the fingertip (Fig. 164), slightly beyond the quick, the sensitive flesh under the fingernail.

We should not wear any nail polish during a hand reading session, as it prevents a complete examination of the nails.

Sometimes there are different nail formations on different fingers. Depending on the nail type, it will act to strengthen or weaken the mount-related qualities, including the associated element corresponding to the finger.



Figure 153. Each nail is measured from the cuticle to the fingertip.

develops) is pink to dark pink, revealing a rich blood supply. Balanced nails are without any irregularities, such as spots, striations or indentations. They should be smooth, strong and slightly supple. They should not be bitten or ragged.

The ideal broad nail will act to strengthen the mount-related qualities, including the element corresponding to a particular finger. As we mentioned in Chapter 3, the element earth relates to the thumb and the mount of Venus; water, to the mount and finger of Jupiter; fire, to the mount and finger of Saturn; air, to the mount and finger of Sun; and ether, to the mount and finger of Mercury.

Significance of Length, Width and Height

The length and width of the nail corresponds to the QQ (Quantity/Quality) Principle where the length (quantity) reflects Saturn-related depth of thought and the width (quality) reflects Mars-related action.

The height of the nail is determined by the degree to which the nail is raised from the cuticle

THE IDEAL NAIL

Balanced nails are large, broad and well developed in length, width and height with a visible moon (Fig. 165). The nail bed (the skin on which the nail grows and from which new nail material

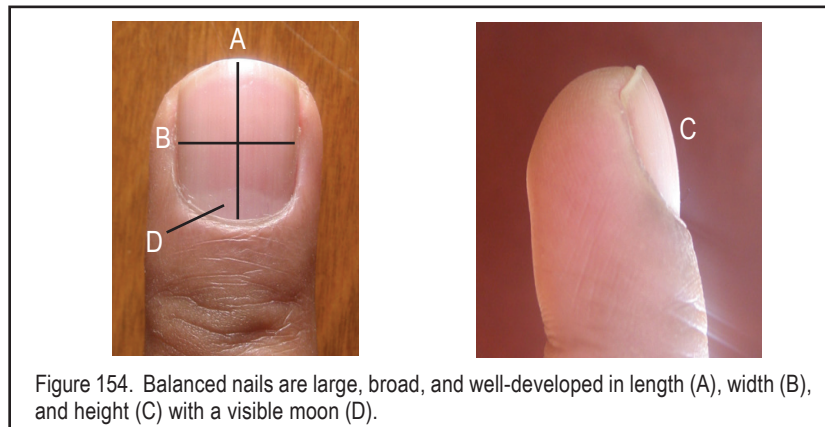


Figure 154. Balanced nails are large, broad, and well-developed in length (A), width (B), and height (C) with a visible moon (D).

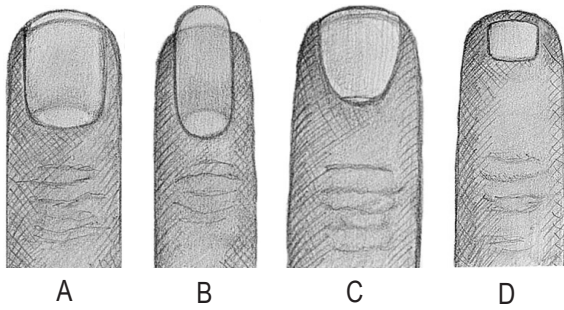


Figure 155. There are four basic classifications of nail types—broad (A), long and narrow (B), flared (C) and short (D).

to the fingertip, and its degree of curvature. The height of the nail reflects to what degree we have an enthusiasm for life.

THE FOUR NAIL TYPES

There are four basic classifications of nail types (Fig. 166)—broad (A), long and narrow (B), flared (C) and short (D).

Broad Nails—The Ideal

The broad nail covers a wide area of our fingertip (Fig. 167). It allows for expanded nerve endings

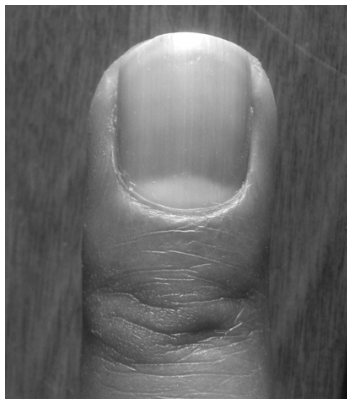


Figure 156. The broad nail covers a wide area of our fingertip.

on the tips of our fingers. Acting in the capacity of armor, the broad nails help insulate us so that we are relaxed and remain calm in day-to-day encounters. We are liberal, patient and broadminded. We feel confident and at ease. We are blessed with a healthy nervous system, physical strength and vitality that support an optimistic state of mind.

The broad nail is balanced in both its length and width. The peaceful interchanges with others (Mars-related width) are supported by our innate wisdom, introspection and foresight (Saturn-related length). Consequently, if people misbehave, we remain calm. Broad nails insulate us from external pressures, allowing us to maintain our composure. We are able to count to ten before we react. We take the time to reflect upon the long-term consequences of our actions.

The developed height of our broad nail reflects balanced breathing on a physical level and an enthusiasm for life on a psychological level.

In Vedic palmistry, broad nails are referred to as elephant consciousness, related to Lord Ganesha, the destroyer of obstacles.

Long and Narrow Nails

The long and narrow nail is small in width in comparison to its length (Fig. 168). Consequently, the nerve endings are constricted. Acting in the capacity of armor, the long and narrow nails do not offer adequate insulation for us to remain peaceful at all times. The length of the nail (Saturn-related) reflects an old soul full of refined ideas about how life should be. However, the narrow width (Mars-related) reflects a lack of strength and endurance to



Figure 157. The long and narrow nail is small in width in comparison to its length.

actualize these ideas. Unlike the self-reliant broad nail individual, we are more affected by the atmosphere of the environment around us. Consequently, we can easily feel anxious if we do not feel support from our environment according to our idealistic vision. As our narrow nails are restricted in width-related Mars, we lack the energy to embrace others' ideas and, consequently, can feel confined and limited in our outlook.

We need to be open, tolerant and flexible to the unpredictable nature of life. We must realize that life cannot always fit according to our high standards and that we cannot simply give up when things are not to our liking. We need to roll up our sleeves and commit ourselves to the difficult task of realizing our ideals.

The long and narrow nail is usually found on a delicate, long and tapering hand, indicating a delicate constitution. We are gentle and impressionable. Although there is grace, refinement and a strong aesthetic sense, long and narrow nails suggest that we lack the vigor and robust constitution associated with the broad nail. For that reason, we

often gravitate to work that does not require too much strenuous physical exertion.

In some cultures, extremely long nails are a sign of the leisure class, as it is difficult or impossible to do most jobs with such nails. Long, narrow nails are often beautifully manicured. We are usually dressed and groomed immaculately. We often grow our nails significantly beyond the fingertip in order to be fashionable. Sensitive though we are, we need to develop Mars power.

Flared Nails

A flared nail is fanlike in formation (Fig. 169). It is short from the cuticle to the tip of the nail and, from a narrow base, widens at the tip. Unlike the example of the broad nail, which maintains its breadth from root to tip, the root of the flared nail is narrow. Without a strong protective shield, our nerves feel cramped; consequently, we easily react if provoked.

The wide tip of the flared nail suggests a desire to share and accomplish a great deal (Mars-related width). However, the short length indicates that we lack the nervous strength to carry out goals in a calm, relaxed manner (Saturn-related short length).



Figure 158. A flared nail is fanlike in formation.

Although we are keen to express ourselves, we overtax an already fragile nervous system. We are prone to nervous strain. We continually place ourselves in situations for which we are not adequately prepared. Already uptight, these circumstances cause us to become nervous and threatened. Believing we have failed, we cry silently into our pillow. In our distress, we resort to biting our nails.

Before we respond to our enthusiasm for taking on a new project, we should make sure that we prepare ourselves to withstand the demands on our nervous system. We should breathe deeply, take an Epsom salts bath, have a deep tissue massage, do yoga exercises and practice meditation. Often our nails lack moons, indicating poor circulation; in this case, we can gently push our cuticles back using warm oil. We should avoid biting our nails, as this removes whatever protective shield we have and only aggravates our nervous disposition. We need to develop a strong inner core—a Saturn-related attribute. When we feel grounded and calm, we will be successful in completing whatever task is necessary.

Short Nails

Short nails are inclined to be squarish, and small in both length and width (Fig. 170). Often the nail is flat. There is an absence of moons and the color is white. In many cases, the nails are also bitten.

Short nails provide inadequate protection for the nerve endings in our fingertips. Imagine if we were knights of old entering battle with a small or defective shield. We would not feel safe, secure or confident. Stripped of our armor, we would feel ex-

posed, vulnerable and always on the alert, ready for attack.

Consequently, short nails reveal an extremely nervous disposition. We are prone to temperamental outbursts and unpredictable, negative behavior. We have an inclination towards practicality and perfection. We become intolerant and agitated easily when people and circumstances fail to meet our critical standards. If our employees have completed the myriad of tasks we have given them, we will find fault with the one thing they did wrong, rather than congratulate them with all the things they did right. However, if someone criticizes us, we are aggressive in our defense. Since we tend to be perfectionists, we set ourselves up for disappointment, as we live in an imperfect world. It is not possible to box people and circumstances into neat categories. Consequently, we become easily aggravated when our exacting demands are unfulfilled.

People need to have kid gloves to deal with short-nailed people. Therefore, those of us with short nails need to develop a more relaxed, patient and tolerant attitude. We need to accept the fact that life is not perfect. Rather than being overly ana-



Figure 159. Short nails are inclined to be squarish, and small in both length and width.

lytical, critical and independent, we need to become generous and flexible enough to allow for mistakes.

Those of us with flared nails will become frustrated for not being able to fulfill our expectations; we turn our anger inward, berating ourselves for our shortcomings. Those of us with short nails will become frustrated with others for not meeting our standards; we will turn our anger outwards and berate others. In both cases, we need to strengthen our nervous system by interior reflection, so that we become less reactive and more peaceful.

Ideal Height

The ideal height of a nail is slightly raised and it follows the curvature of the top phalange (Fig. 171). It is a positive sign that reflects sensitivity and enthusiasm. We are amiable with a flexible attitude. We have good circulation.

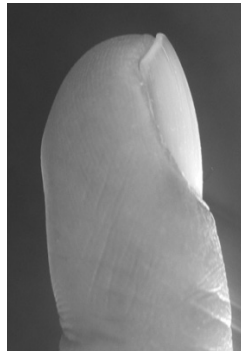


Figure 160. The ideal height of a nail is slightly raised.

Flat Nail

A flat nail is level and horizontal, without any hollow or bump (Fig. 172). It does not follow the curvature of the top phalange.

A flat nail indicates that we are overly isolated in our own way of thinking and doing. Some fire is mis-

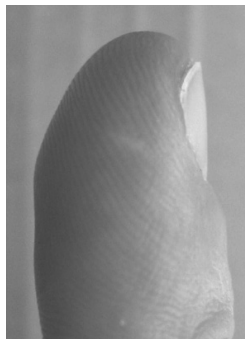


Figure 161. A flat nail is level and horizontal, without any hollow or bump.

sing. We are matter-of-fact, pragmatic and so realistic that we limit the power of our imagination to suggest possible alternatives to our way of doing things. We need to be less isolated in our way of thinking and open to miracles.

Beak-Like Nail

A beak-like nail with excessive height curves over the tip of the top phalange (Fig. 173). It is a sign of oversensitivity.

The nail, like armor, is the protective shield for our nervous system. A high convex nail that curves over the finger is a sign of our desire for overprotection. We are like a turtle that tucks its head inside the shell.

Negative emotions, such as fear and sadness, overwhelm us so that we are unable to feel love and joy. This causes us to withdraw from interactions with others. Although we need the protection of our nails, the beak-like nail overcompensates by insulating our nervous system from the environment. We may be sensitive and anxious to the point of paranoia in extreme cases. Our oversensitivity is often reflected in stooped shoulders and a tight chest. We may have a build up of fluid in our system that leaves us prone to bronchial ailments.

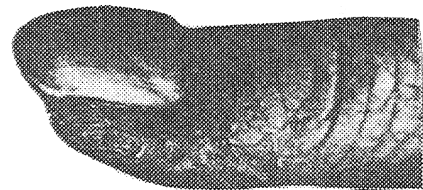


Figure 162. A beak-like nail curves over the tip of the top phalange.