

# Polydactyly

Polydactyly is the presence of one or more extra fingers or toes and is the most common abnormality of the human hand. Duplication of the small finger is particularly common in African-Americans and is rarely associated with any other abnormalities or syndromes. In Caucasians the extra fingers are more likely to be on the thumb side of the hand and are often associated abnormalities of other parts of the body. Duplication of the middle fingers is less common.



When polydactyly occurs in the foot, the fifth toe is duplicated in approximately 80% of cases.

There is a great deal of variability possible in the appearance and structure of the extra digit, ranging from a small tag of soft tissue with no bony attachment to the rest of the hand or foot, to a finger or toe that is a complete duplication. In some types of upper extremity polydactyly the abnormality is not only in the hand but in the forearm as well.



## Treatment

The goal of treatment is usually a five fingered hand with a normally functioning thumb, or a foot with five toes and width similar to the other foot. Specific treatment depends on which fingers or toes are duplicated and the complexity of the duplication. In general, treatment of an extra digit on the little finger side of the hand is simpler than treatment of one on the thumb side or in the middle of the hand.

