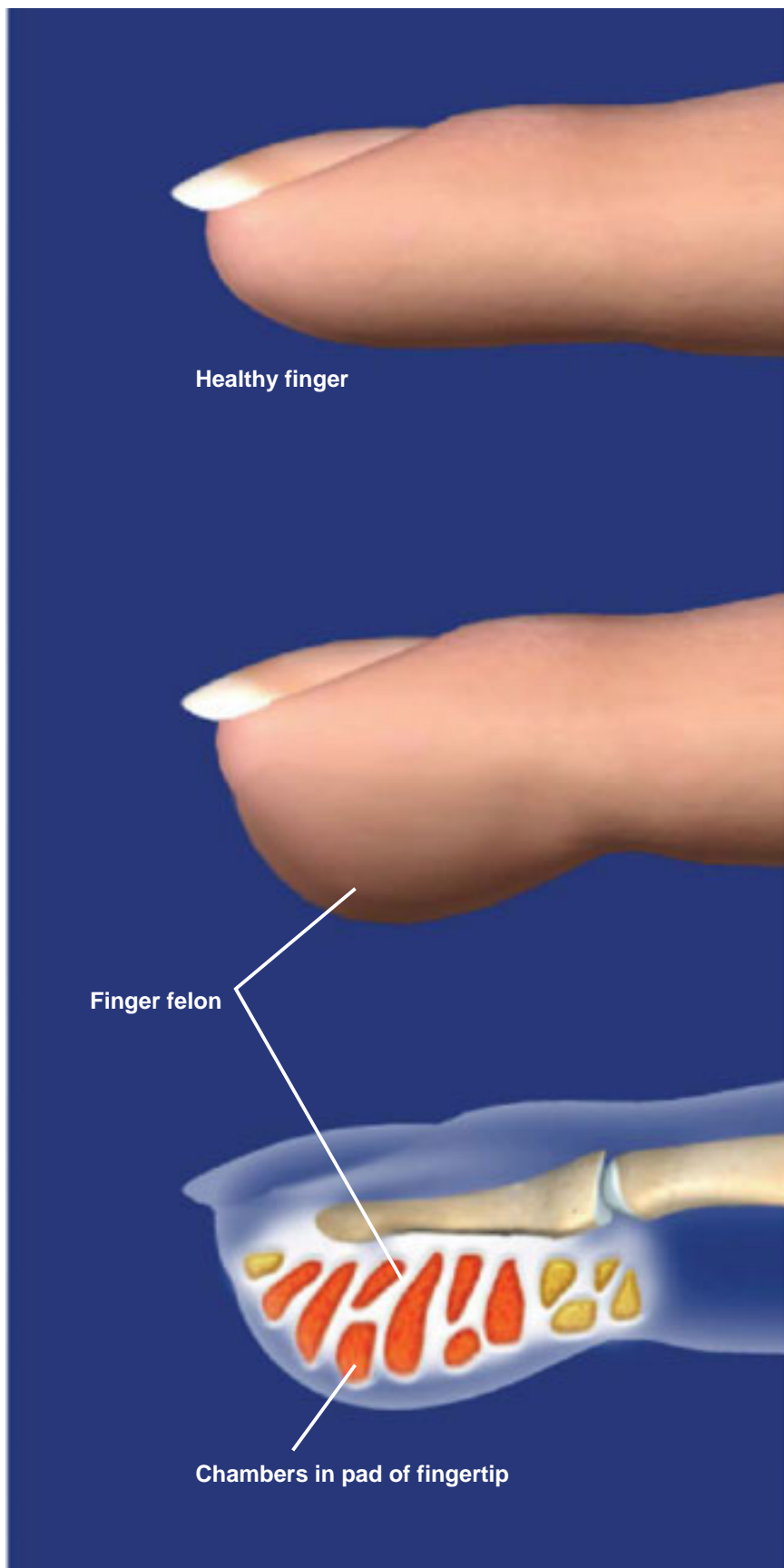


Finger Felon



Overview

This condition is an abscess that forms within the pad of the fingertip. A felon can swell dramatically, leading to significant pain and sensitivity.

Anatomy

The pad of the fingertip is formed by a spongy layer of tissue made up of small chambers of fat.

How a Felon Forms

A felon forms when bacteria enter the pad of the fingertip through a puncture or cut. The bacteria invade the surrounding chambers in the pad of the fingertip, causing them to swell with fluid and eventually with pus.

Causes

Felons are commonly caused by puncture wounds from metal, glass, or other sharp objects. Diabetic blood draws at the fingertips can also cause a felon. The index finger and thumb are the most commonly affected digits.

Symptoms

Common symptoms can include severe, throbbing pain, swelling of the fingertip, and occasionally redness. In some cases the pressure inside the chambers builds and breaks through the skin, causing visible drainage.

Treatment

Felons require drainage of the pus from the chambers of the fingertip. Antibiotics and fingertip soaks are part of the complete treatment plan. A patient with a puncture wound or cut may also be given a tetanus shot.