



# Stem cells help your fingers regenerate

If you shave off the very tip of your finger or toe it should grow back. Now scientists understand more about how this happens. Mayumi Ito at New York University and her colleagues took a closer look at mouse digits because they have similar properties to human digits. Mayumi and her team identified a previously unknown population of stem cells at the base of each mouse toenail. Tests showed that these “nail stem cells” help with ordinary nail growth, but can also rebuild the entire digit tip after amputation. It seems that we partly retain the mechanisms that operate limb regeneration in amphibians. This may provide direct clues which might be able to extend our ability to regenerate limbs.

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