

Athlete's Foot

Definition

- Fungus infection of the feet
- Causes an itchy rash on the feet and between the toes
- Mainly occurs in teens

Health Information

Symptoms

- Red, scaly, cracked rash between the toes. Often, also involves the insteps of the feet.
- The rash itches and burns. With itching, the rash becomes raw and weepy.
- Feet may smell bad.
- Mainly in teens. Before age 10, it's usually something else.

Cause

- A fungus infection that grows best on warm, damp skin of the feet.

Prevention of Recurrent Athlete's Foot

- Keep the feet clean and dry. Change socks if they are damp.
- The fungus can't grow on dry, normal skin.

Care Advice

1. Overview:

- Athlete's foot is common in teens.
- It's caused by a fungus that grows best on warm, damp skin.
- Here is some care advice that should help.

2. Antifungal Cream:

- Use an antifungal cream 2 times per day.
- Examples are Lamisil, Micatin or Lotrimin cream. No prescription is needed.
- Put it on the rash and 1 inch beyond its borders.
- Continue the cream for at least 7 days after the rash is gone.

3. Keep the Feet Dry:

- Rinse the feet 2 times per day before using the cream.
- Go barefoot or wear sandals as much as possible.
- Wear socks made of man-made fibers. They will keep the feet drier and cooler than cotton. Change them twice daily.
- The socks can be washed with the normal laundry. They don't need to be boiled.

4. Do Not Scratch:

- Scratching infected feet will delay a cure.
- Rinse the itchy feet in cool water for relief.

5. Prevention of Jock Itch:

- The athlete's foot fungus can spread to the groin area. This is called jock itch.
- The fungus can be spread by a towel or washcloth.
- Therefore, after bathing, dry the groin area before the feet.
- You can also use a different towel for the feet.
- Do this until the athlete's foot is cured.

6. What to Expect:

- With proper treatment, athlete's foot goes away within 2 weeks.

7. Return to School:

- Children with athlete's foot do not need to miss any school. Your child may take gym and play sports.
- Athlete's foot is not easily spread to others. The fungus can't grow on dry, normal skin.

Call Your Doctor If

- Rash is not better after 1 week on treatment
- Rash is not gone after 2 weeks on treatment
- You think your child needs to be seen
- Your child becomes worse

Pediatric Care Advice

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