

Ringworm (Tinea Capitis, Tinea Corporis)

Patient and Family Education



This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.

What is ringworm?

Ringworm is caused by a fungus, not a worm. It affects the skin or scalp. It can spread by skin-to-skin and person-to-skin contact. After 48 hours of treatment, it is not contagious (spread easily from person-to-person).

	Skin - Tinea Corporis (Body), JockItch and Athlete's Foot	Scalp - Tinea Capitis
<p>What are the possible symptoms? Your child may have one or more of these:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporis occurs on the body and causes an itchy, ring-shaped, red patch, usually ½ inch to 1 inch in size. It has a scaly, raised border and a clear center. • Jock itch is a red, itchy rash in the groin area. • Athlete's foot is a scaly, itchy rash on the feet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hair loss • Flaky, scaly or crusty patches which may become tender, swollen and weepy • Black dots on the scalp after hair falls out • Swollen glands
<p>What is the treatment? Some general guidelines to follow include:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use an anti-fungal cream as directed by your child's doctor. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Apply the cream to the rash and 1 inch beyond the edge of the rash. - Keep using the cream after the rash is gone, usually for at least one week. • Teach your child not to scratch the area. • Wash clothes, socks and bed linens in hot, soapy water. • Pets may not itch. Take them to a veterinarian if they have a rash or sores. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topical treatment may not work. • Medicine by mouth is usually needed. • Give medicine by mouth as directed by your child's doctor. Fungal infections of the scalp often take a long time to get better. • Give this medicine for the full length of time, usually 4 to 6 weeks. • This medicine interacts with other medicines. Check with your child's doctor first before giving your child any other medicines. • Use special shampoo as directed by your child's doctor. • Return for follow-up blood tests as ordered by your child's doctor. • Teach your child not to scratch the area. • Wash clothes, bed linens, combs, brushes, hats and hair accessories in hot, soapy water. • Pets may not itch. Take them to a veterinarian if they have a rash or sores.
<p>When should I call the doctor? Call your child's doctor if the rash:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has not cleared up in 3 weeks • Gets worse or continues to spread after one week of treatment • Spreads from the scalp to the body or from the body to the scalp • Has pus draining from it • Also call your child's doctor if you have questions or concerns about how your child looks or feels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not improve some in 2 weeks Is not totally clear in 8 weeks - your child may need another course of medicine. • Spreads from the scalp to the body or from the body to the scalp • Has pus draining from it <p>Also call your child's doctor if you have questions or concerns about how your child looks or feels.</p>

How can I help prevent ringworm?

To help prevent ringworm, have your child:

- Keep his skin, hair and feet clean and dry.
- Wear sandals or shoes at gyms, lockers and pools.
- Avoid touching pets with bald spots.
- Teach your child not to share clothing, towels, hairbrushes, combs, headgear or other personal care items. Clean and dry these items well after use.

When can my child return to daycare or school?

Your child may return after treatment begins or as directed by his doctor.