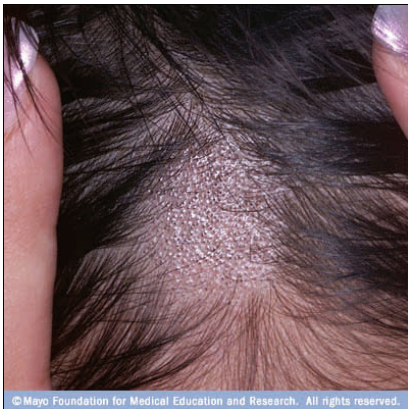


CONTACT YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER

If you have any signs of a bacterial infection, which can result from scratching, you should call or go to your healthcare provider. These signs include:

- Swelling
- Warmth to the touch
- Sudden worsening in redness of the patches
- Red streaking
- Pus
- Discharge
- Fever (above 100.44°F / 38°C.)

If your skin does not improve after 4 weeks of self-care, additional medical care should be sought.



When ringworm infects your scalp or beard, you should call your doctor. Anti-fungal medications are usually necessary when your hair is infected.

PREVENTION

To prevent ringworm:

- Don't share clothing, sports gear, towels, or sheets.
- Wear slippers or sandals in locker rooms and public bathing areas.
- Shower and shampoo well after any sport that includes skin-to-skin contact.
- Wear loose-fitting cotton clothing. Change your socks and underwear at least once a day.
- Keep your skin clean and dry. Always dry yourself completely after showers or baths.
- If you have athlete's foot, put your socks on before your underwear so that fungi do not spread from your feet to your groin.
- Take your pet to the vet if it has patches of missing hair, which could be a sign of a fungal infection.

Ringworm can come back. To prevent this, use talcum or other drying powder on the affected area every day.

If you or someone in your family has symptoms, it is important to treat ringworm right away to keep other family members from getting it.

From Medline Plus, U.S. National Library of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health

Revised August 2009



RINGWORM



a fungus infection

UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME
NOTRE DAME IN 46556
<http://uhs.nd.edu>

RINGWORM

Ringworm is a common skin disorder. Although its name suggests otherwise, **it is caused by a fungus**, not a worm.

Ringworm can affect skin on your body and is known as *tinea corporis*, your scalp- *tinea capitis*, groin area -*tinea cruris*, which is also called jock itch, or your feet -*tinea pedis*, which is probably the most common and is called athlete's foot.

Often there are several patches of ringworm on your body at the same time. Your doctor will diagnose ringworm primarily based on the appearance of the skin.

SYMPTOMS

If you have a ring-shaped rash, you probably have ringworm. The usual symptoms are:

- Itchy, red, raised, scaly patches that may blister and ooze. The patches often have sharply-defined edges. They are often redder around the outside with normal skin tone in the center. This may create the appearance of a ring. Your skin may appear unusually dark or light.
- When your scalp or beard is infected, you will have bald patches.
- If nails are infected, they become discolored, thick, and even crumble.

CAUSES

Many bacteria and fungi live on your body. Some of these are useful to you and your body. Others can multiply rapidly and form infections. Ringworm occurs when a particular type of fungus grows and multiplies anywhere on your skin, scalp, or nails.

The fungi that causes ringworm thrive in warm, moist areas. It is more likely when you have frequent wetness, such as from sweating, and minor injuries to your skin, scalp or nails.

Ringworm is contagious. It can be passed from one person to the next by direct skin-to-skin contact or by contact with contaminated items such as combs, unwashed clothing, and shower or pool surfaces. You can also catch ringworm from pets that carry the fungus. Cats are common carriers.



Tinea pedis
(athlete's foot)



Tinea corporis
(ringworm)

ADAM.

[Jock itch](#) is a form of ringworm that causes an itchy rash on the skin of your groin area. It is much more common in men than in women. Most people get it by accidentally spreading the fungus that causes [athlete's foot](#) to their own groin area.

TREATMENT

Ringworm usually responds well to self-care within 4 weeks without having to see a doctor.

- Keep your skin clean and dry
- Apply over-the-counter antifungal or drying powders, lotions, or creams. Those that contain miconazole, Clotrimazole, terbinafine, or similar ingredients are often effective.
- Wash sheets and nightclothes every day while infected.

Most ringworm of the skin can be treated at home with creams you can buy without a prescription. Your rash may clear up soon after you start treatment, but it's important to keep using the cream for as long as the label or your doctor says. This will keep the infection from coming back.

A severe or persistent infection may require treatment by a doctor. It will usually respond quickly to antifungal pills.



Infected pets also should be treated.