

Illini Pediatrics, LLC

Joseph E. Cangas, MD

107 N Main St, Ste 2B
Columbia, IL 62236
(618) 281-HEAL (4325)

Athlete's Foot Brief Version

What is athlete's foot?

Athlete's foot mainly occurs in adolescents. Athlete's foot is a red, scaly, cracked rash between the toes. The rash usually:

- Itches and burns.
- Becomes raw and oozes fluid when scratched.
- Spreads to the instep.

Athlete's foot is caused by a fungus that grows on warm, damp skin.

How can I take care of my child?

- **Use antifungal cream.** Buy Tinactin, Micatin, or Lotrimin cream at your drugstore. Apply the cream to the rash and well beyond its borders twice a day. Continue applying for several weeks, or for at least 7 days after the rash seems to be gone.
- **Keep the area dry.** Athlete's foot improves dramatically if the feet are kept dry. It helps to go barefoot or wear sandals or thongs as much as possible. Wear cotton socks because the cotton absorbs sweat and keeps the feet dry.
- **Control foot odor.** The feet often stop smelling bad when the athlete's foot improves. Rinsing the feet and changing socks twice a day are essential.

Can athlete's foot be spread to other people?

Athlete's foot is not easily passed from person to person but is thought to be spread by direct contact with contaminated surfaces such as locker room or bathroom floors. The fungus won't grow on dry, normal skin.

Call your child's doctor during office hours if:

- It looks infected.
- The athlete's foot is not improved in 1 week.
- It is not completely cured after using this treatment for 4 weeks.
- You have other concerns or questions.

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Written by B.D. Schmitt, M.D., author of "Your Child's Health," Bantam Books.

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