



Ringworm (Tinea Corporis)

Ringworm of the body (tin ee uh COR por is) is an infection of the skin caused by a fungus (a plant which is too small to see). Ringworm is not caused by a worm.

The infection starts as a rash with tiny red pimples. The pimples slowly spread and form a round or oval ring, typically ½ to 1 inch (12 to 25 mm) in size. The edges of the area are red, raised or scaly. After the ring has formed, the skin inside the rash may look pink or almost normal. The rash usually appears in only a few places on the skin but it may occur anywhere on the body and may itch. Ringworm rarely causes serious problems.

Ringworm is contagious. It can spread to humans from puppies, kittens and pet rodents. It can also spread from people to people when someone touches the rash or handles something that has touched it.

Diagnosis

The doctor will diagnose ringworm based on the child's health history and by looking at the rash. A few scales from the infected area may be scraped and sent to the lab for more testing.

Treatment

A single patch of ringworm can be treated with an over-the-counter antifungal cream. The cream will usually contain miconazole, ketoconazole or clotrimazole.

- Read the medicine's label or ask your doctor or pharmacist to know if the cream you choose is safe for children.
- Ask how often it should be applied and for how many days.
- If there are many patchy areas, the doctor may prescribe a stronger medicine.

Ringworm usually goes away within 4 weeks of treatment.

How to put on the antifungal cream

1. Wash and dry your hands.
2. Wash the rash with soap and water in the bathtub, bathroom sink or pan. ***Do not use the kitchen sink to wash the rash.***

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How to put on the antifungal cream, continued

3. Dry the rash completely with a paper towel or clean cloth towel. Do not touch this towel to healthy skin. (A cloth towel must be washed before it is used again.)
4. Apply a thin layer of cream just past the outside edges of the rash.
5. Spread the cream, beginning from the outside area first, then move toward the center of the rash (Picture 1).
6. Do not cover the ringworm with a bandage.
7. Wash and dry your hands well.

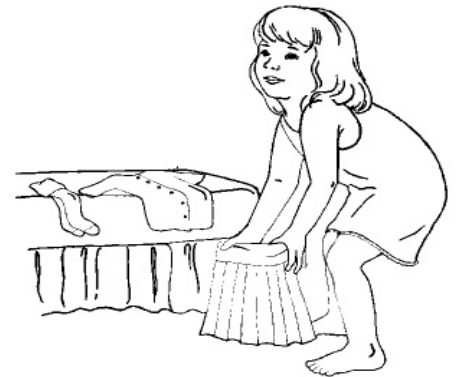


Picture 1 Spread the cream from the outer part of the rash toward the center.

How to prevent ringworm

The fungus grows well on warm, dark, moist areas of the body. To prevent ringworm from spreading to others:

- Keep the skin clean and dry. Dry the skin well after washing or bathing.
- Wash hands well and right away if a ringworm rash is touched.
- Wear clean clothes, socks and underwear every day and do not share clothes or personal items (brushes, combs, barrettes) with others (Picture 2).
- Wash and dry clothing and towels that have come in contact with the rash using the hottest settings allowed on the care labels.
- Wash the bathtub, bathroom sink or pan well after each use.



Picture 2 Wear clean clothes every day.

Other advice

- Wear shoes in locker rooms and public showers.
- Shower right away after all contact sports like wrestling and football.
- Keep fingernails short and clean.
- Wash hands after playing with pets. Check pets for ringworm and get them treated if necessary.
- Your child can return to daycare or school after treatment has begun.

When to call the doctor

Call your child's doctor if the rash:

- gets worse and shows signs of infection (pus, swelling or discharge)
- does not seem to be healing after 2 weeks
- has not healed completely after 4 weeks