

Tinea Versicolor

Tinea versicolor (TIN ee uh VUHR sih kuhl er) is a common rash caused by the overgrowth of microscopic yeast on the skin's surface. The rash looks like small, scaly spots. They can be either lighter or darker than the normal skin. The scaly rash usually occurs on the upper arms, chest, back, and neck. Tinea versicolor is more common during the warm, humid summer months.

The rash is not infectious or contagious. This means your child did not get tinea versicolor from someone else and cannot give it to anyone. Adolescents (teens) often get this rash when the yeast combines with the oil produced on the chest and back during puberty.

Diagnosis and Treatment

A doctor may diagnose tinea versicolor by:

- the features of the rash or
- by looking at the rash under a special light called Wood's lamp.

Sometimes, the doctor may scrape a few scales from the surface of one of the spots and examine it under a microscope.

Treatments are chosen depending on the location and severity of the tinea versicolor. There are two types of medicine:

- **oral** (taken by mouth)
- **topical** (used on the skin) such as shampoos, soaps, creams or lotions. Shampoos and soaps should be used on the scalp, neck, chest and back. These should be left on for 5 to 10 minutes before being washed off.

Even after it has been treated, tinea versicolor can recur (come back). After the medicines your child is given for this condition have treated the yeast, it can take weeks or months for the skin to go back to its normal color.

What to Do at Home

- After participating in sporting events or sweating, your child should wash with warm soapy water, rinse well, and dry skin thoroughly.
- He or she needs to use a clean towel and washcloth each time he washes.
- Call your child's doctor if the rash gets worse, even with treatment.