



Ringworm

(Tinea Capitis, Tinea Corporis)

Patient and Family Education

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 contact. After 48 hours of treatment, it is not contagious.

What are the possible symptoms?

Your child may have one or more of the following symptoms:

- A ring-shaped pink patch, usually one-half inch to one inch in size with a scaly raised border and a clear center
- Mild itching
- Hair loss on the scalp
- Black dots on the scalp
- Tender, swollen and weepy area on the scalp

What is the treatment?

Your child's doctor will talk with you about specific care for your child. Some general guidelines to follow for the skin include:

- Use an anti-fungal cream as directed by your child's doctor.
 - Apply the cream to the rash and one inch beyond the edge of the rash.
 - Keep using the cream for one week after the rash is gone.
- Topical treatment may not treat scalp ringworm, medicine given by mouth is usually required.
 - Give medicine by mouth as directed by your child's doctor. Fungal infections of the scalp often take a long time to get better.
 - Be sure to give this medicine for the full length of time (four to six weeks).
 - Avoid giving this medicine with any other medicines. Check with your child's doctor first.
- Return for follow-up blood tests as ordered by your child's doctor.
- Teach your child not to scratch the area.
- Wash clothes and bed linens in hot soapy water.
- Have pets checked by a veterinarian, especially kittens and puppies if they have a rash or sores. Pets may not itch.

When should I call the doctor?

Call your child's doctor if the:

- Skin rash has not cleared up in three weeks
- Rash continues to spread after one week of treatment
- Rash spreads from the scalp to the body, or the body to the scalp
- Pus draining from the rash

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room right away.

This is general information and is not specific medical advice for your child. Always consult your child's doctor or other healthcare provider if you have any questions or concerns about the care or health of your child. A Children's Healthcare of Atlanta pediatric advice nurse is available 24 hours a day at 404-250-KIDS.

Ringworm, continued

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

Also, teach your child not to share clothing, towels, hairbrushes, combs, headgear, or other personal care items. Such items should be thoroughly cleaned well and dried after use.

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room right away.

This is general information and is not specific medical advice for your child. Always consult your child's doctor or other healthcare provider if you have any questions or concerns about the care or health of your child. A Children's Healthcare of Atlanta pediatric advice nurse is available 24 hours a day at 404-250-KIDS.