



# Athlete's Foot

---

## Definition

- [Fungus infection](#) of the feet
- Causes itchy rash between the toes

## Symptoms

- Red, scaly, cracked rash between the toes
- The rash itches and burns
- With itching, the rash becomes raw and weepy
- Often involves the insteps of the feet
- Unpleasant foot odor
- Mainly in adolescents. Prior to age 10, it's usually something else.

## Cause

- A fungus infection that grows best on warm, damp skin

## Care Advice

1. **Antifungal Cream:** Apply an [antifungal cream](#) 2 times per day.
  - a. Examples are Lamisil, Micatin or Lotrimin cream (no prescription needed)
  - b. Apply it to the rash and 1 inch beyond its borders
  - c. Continue the cream for at least 7 days after the rash is cleared
2. **Keep the Feet Dry:**
  - a. Rinse the feet 2 times per day before applying the cream.
  - b. Go barefoot or wear sandals as much as possible.
  - c. Wear socks made of synthetic fibers. They will keep the feet drier and cooler than cotton. Change them twice daily.
3. **Avoid Scratching:** Scratching infected feet will delay a cure. Rinse the itchy feet in cool water for relief.
4. **Contagiousness:**
  - a. The condition is not very contagious. The fungus can't grow on dry, normal skin.
  - b. Children with athlete's foot do not need to miss any school or sports. Your child may take gym and continue with sports.

- c. The socks can be washed with the regular laundry. They don't need to be boiled.
- 5. **Jock Itch Prevention:** The athlete's foot fungus can be transmitted to your groin and cause Jock Itch (e.g., via towel or washcloth). Therefore, after bathing, dry the groin area before the feet or use a separate towel for your feet until the athlete's foot is cured.
- 6. **Expected Course:** With proper treatment, athlete's foot disappears by 2 weeks.
- 7. **Call Your Doctor If:**
  - a. It looks infected
  - b. Rash continues to spread after 1 week on treatment
  - c. Rash is not gone by 2 weeks on treatment
  - d. Your child becomes worse

*Adapted from The American Academy of Pediatrics (2011) at [www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org)*