

Ringworm (Tinea Corporis)

What is ringworm?

Ringworm is a fungus infection of the skin. It is often transferred to people from puppies or kittens who have ringworm. It can also be passed from person to person.

If your child has ringworm, your child will have a ring-shaped pink patch on the skin. The patch will:

- Usually be 1/2 to 1 inch in size with a scaly, raised border and clear center.
- Get slowly bigger.
- Be mildly itchy.

How long does it last?

With the appropriate treatment, ringworm should go away in 3 to 4 weeks.

How can I take care of my child?

- **Antifungal cream** Buy Tinactin, Micatin, or Lotrimin cream at your drugstore. You won't need a prescription. Apply the cream twice a day to the rash and 1 inch beyond its borders. Continue this treatment for 1 week after the ringworm patch is smooth and seems to be gone. It may take 4-6 weeks of daily use to make the rash go away completely. Encourage your child to avoid scratching the area.
- **Tea Tree oil** may be applied with a cotton ball to the affected area 1-2 times per day for several weeks or you may add 5-10 drops to a bath.
- **Contagiousness** Ringworm of the skin is mildly contagious. It requires direct skin-to-skin contact. After 48 hours of treatment, ringworm is not contagious at all. Your child doesn't have to miss any school or day care. The type of ringworm you get from pets is not spread from human to human, only from animal to human.
- **Treatment of pets** Kittens and puppies with ringworm usually do not itch and may not have any rash. Pets with a skin rash or sores should be examined by a veterinarian. Also have your child avoid close contact with the animal until he is treated. Natural immunity develops in animals after 4 months even without treatment. Call your veterinarian for other questions.

When should I call my child's health care provider?

Call during office hours if:

- The ringworm continues to spread or worsens after 1 week of treatment.
- The rash has not cleared up in 4 weeks with medications given EVERYDAY.
- You have other concerns or questions.

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