

Athlete's Foot (Tinea Pedis)

A chronic infection caused by various types of fungus, Athlete's foot is often spread in places where people go barefoot such as public showers or swimming pools. The warmth and dampness of areas around swimming pools, showers, and locker rooms, are also breeding grounds for fungi. The condition ranges from mild scaling and itching to painful inflammation and blisters. It usually starts between the toes or on the arch and may spread to the bottom and sides of the foot. The fungus usually attacks the feet because shoes create a warm, dark, and humid environment that encourages fungus growth.

Not all fungus conditions lead to Athlete's foot, however. Other conditions, such as malfunctions of the sweat mechanism, reaction to dyes or adhesives in shoes, eczema, and psoriasis, also may mimic Athlete's foot.

Symptoms of athlete's feet include:

You may notice dry flaky skin, itching scaling, inflammation, and blisters. Athlete's foot may spread to the soles of the feet and to the toenails, and can spread to other parts of the body, including the groin and underarms.

General Treatments:

Depending on the type of infection you have, various kinds of medication may be used in treating your fungal problem. Successful treatment usually involves a combination of medication and self-care.

If your condition is not serious, over-the-counter and prescription powders, lotions, or ointments can often help treat scaling, itching, and inflammation. Consult us before taking any medication. Foot soaks may help dry excessive perspiration, but you should contact our office first. If your Athlete's foot does not improve, we may prescribe stronger medication.

You can prevent Athlete's foot by:

- Avoiding walking barefoot. Use shower shoes.
- Reducing perspiration by using talcum powder.
- Wearing light and airy shoes.
- Wearing socks that keep your feet dry, and changing them frequently if you perspire heavily.