



ATHLETE'S FOOT AND TOENAIL FUNGUS

What is athlete's foot and why does it develop?

Athlete's foot is a very common skin condition caused by a fungus infection. It occurs mostly in teenage boys and adult men, but it can also develop in women and children.

The fungus that causes athlete's foot is everywhere in the environment. It grows best in warm, moist places. Sweaty feet, not drying feet well after bathing or swimming, tight shoes, and a warm climate all contribute to the condition.

Athlete's foot is not easily spread from person to person. Why some people get athlete's foot and others don't is not known.

What does athlete's foot look like?

Athlete's foot may look different from person to person. There may be:

- Scaly, cracked and red skin between the toes
- Red and scaly skin over the soles of the feet and along the sides of the feet
- The toenail may become thick and discolored.

How is athlete's foot treated?

With proper treatment, athlete's foot usually improves in a few weeks. Toenail infections are very difficult to treat.

➤ Antifungal creams

- Buy Lamisil, clotrimazole, or miconazole from your local pharmacy or drugstore. You will not need a prescription.
- After bathing, dry the feet carefully, especially between the toes.
- Then apply the cream to the rash and the surrounding skin.
- Apply the cream one other time each day.
- Continue to apply the cream twice daily until the rash clears. Successful treatment often takes between 1-2 weeks (with Lamisil) and 3-4 weeks (with miconazole or clotrimazole).



The Permanente Medical Group, Inc.
DEPARTMENT OF DERMATOLOGY
San Francisco

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What can I do to prevent athlete's foot?

Since the fungus does not grow on dry, normal skin, you can prevent athlete's foot by keeping your feet dry. Follow the simple suggestions:

- Use a blow dryer on a low setting to dry the feet after bathing.
- Sprinkle a drying powder such as Zeasorb-AF or Tinactin on your feet and into your shoes.
- Wear cotton socks and change them if they become damp.
- Avoid tight shoes, especially in the summer.
- If possible, go barefoot or wear sandals at home.