

## Ringworm

- Fungal infections that are on the surface of skin and is not due to a worm of any type
- The medical term for ringworm is tinea
- The condition is further named for the site of the body where the infection occurs
- Some but not all ringworm causes a scaly, crusted rash that may itch
- A proper diagnosis is essential to successful treatment

What causes ringworm?

- World is full of yeasts, molds, and fungi, however only a few cause skin problems
- These agents are called the dermatophytes, which means “skin fungi”
- Skin fungi can only live on the dead layer of keratin protein on the top of the skin

What are the sources of skin fungi?

- Hard to determine the exact source
- Some fungi live only on human skin, hair, or nails
- Others live on animals and only sometimes are found on human skin
- Still others live in the soil

Types of ringworms:

1. Tinea barbae: ringworm of the bearded area of the face and neck, with swelling and marked crusting, often with itching, sometimes causes the hair to break off.
2. Tinea capitis: ringworm of the scalp commonly affects children, mostly in late childhood or adolescence. This condition may spread in schools.
3. Tinea corporis: When fungus affects the skin of the body, it often produces the round spots of classic ringworm. Sometimes, these spots have an “active” outer border as they slowly grow and advance.
4. Tinea cruris: Tinea of the groin (“jock itch”) tends to have a reddish-brown color and extends from the folds of the groin down onto one or both thighs. Other conditions that mimic tinea cruris include yeast infections, psoriasis, and intertrigo, a chafing rash which results from the skin rubbing against the skin.
5. Tinea faciei: Ringworm on the face except in the area of the beard. On the face, ringworm is rarely ring-shaped. Characteristically, it causes red, scaly patches with indistinct edges.

6. Tinea manus: ringworm involving the hands, particularly the palms and the spaces between the fingers. It typically causes thickening (hyperkeratosis) of these areas, often on only one hand.
7. Tinea pedis: Athlete's foot may cause scaling and inflammation in the toe webs. Another common form of tinea pedis produces a thickening or scaling of the skin on the heels and soles.
8. Tinea unguium: fungus that can make the fingernails and toenails yellow, thick, and crumbly.

How is ringworm diagnosed?

- Diagnosis is usually obvious from its location and appearance
- Skin scrapings for microscopic examination and a culture of the affected skin establish the diagnosis of ringworm

How is ringworm treated?

- Most ringworms can be treated topically (external application)
- However, some ringworms require systemic treatment (scalp and nail fungus)

All information from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Refer to CDC website for more information: <http://www.cdc.gov>