

1/91 Bridge Street,
Ahuriri
Ph. (06) 835 7948
Fax. (06) 835 7930
ahuriri.pharmacy@hdl.net.nz
www.ahuriripharmacy.co.nz



Fungal infections

Skin-related fungal infections occur mainly in warm, moist areas such as in the folds of skin, under the breast, around the groin, in the vagina and between the toes. Initially the skin can look red and rash-like, but can also be scaly, cracked and peeling, and become inflamed and very itchy. With jock itch, the skin is itchy with raised red patches and sharp borders. In contrast, ringworm usually appears on the arms, legs, face, neck or body-trunk as a flat, red, itchy, ring-shaped sore that is clear at the centre but with a red scaly border.

Infected skin can become uncomfortable, especially if hot and painful. At its worst, the skin can split and secondary bacterial infection can arise.

Athlete's foot is easy to catch from walking around public swimming pools, camp ground facilities and other areas where there are puddles of water through which many people walk in bare feet. The fungi organisms can live in the puddles, thriving in the warm and moist conditions and on surfaces that infected people have touched and onto which their shed skin has settled. If you have itchiness and flaky skin between your toes or notice a red scaly spot on your skin, you are likely to have a fungal infection and you should see your Pharmacist for treatment options. To prevent getting fungal infections in the future or passing them on to others, keep dry the skin areas prone to infection. This is important especially after sweaty sports and bathing/showering. Wash sweaty areas and towel-dry well. Maybe use a hair dryer to dry between the toes.

Don't wear tight clothing for long periods to prevent moisture build-up on the skin. Also avoid clothing made from fabrics that stop moisture wicking away from the skin.

Wear flip-flops in public showers and when walking around swimming pools or wear other suitable footwear that protects your feet from contact with the ground and prevents them picking-up any fungal organisms.

Don't share clothing, shoes, towels, etc.

Let sweaty shoes dry out thoroughly before re-wearing them.

Change socks and underclothes daily.

Inspect your pets for fungal infections and treat them if necessary.

Eat in a healthy way, keep fit and get plenty of sleep so your immune system can do its best to help ward-off fungal infections.

If you do end-up with a skin infection, treatment is with a specific antifungal preparation available from your Pharmacist. The type of preparation best for you - cream, powder, lotion or spray - will depend on the area being treated. Normally preparations have to be used for two weeks to clear the infection, and for a further week or two after that to prevent a return.