



Athlete's Foot

Patient information leaflet



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES



Common Ailments Service

Only use this leaflet if your pharmacist has advised you about your or your child's condition.

Athlete's foot is a common fungal infection that affects the feet. The infection usually starts between the toes, but may spread to the bottom and sides of the feet.

The skin may be:

- itchy, white, soggy and cracked
- red, sore, dry and flaky
- scaly, with small blisters



Athlete's foot can spread easily to other people who touch infected skin or walk barefoot in the same places as someone with athlete's foot.

You are more likely to get athlete's foot if you have wet or sweaty feet, damaged skin on your feet, diabetes or a weakened immune system, for example from cancer treatment or steroid therapy.



Treatment and Prevention

Medicines that can help

These medicines are not suitable for everyone. Make sure you have asked your pharmacist for advice about what treatment is best for you or your child.

Athlete's foot probably will not get better on its own, but antifungal creams such as **clotrimazole 1% cream**, **miconazole 2% cream** or **terbinafine 1% cream** should stop the fungus growing.

It is important to use the cream for the right amount of time, even if the rash has gone away.

Avoid smoking or going near unprotected flames while using the cream – some creams have ingredients that can easily catch fire.

If your skin is inflamed, your pharmacist may suggest using **hydrocortisone 1% cream** (a steroid cream) along with the antifungal cream to make your skin less itchy, sore and red.

Always read the patient information leaflet that comes with your medicine.

If you are concerned about any side effects from a treatment, report it to a doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

You can also report side effects on the Yellow Card [app](#) or [website](#).



Treatment and Prevention

Prevention

To stop athlete's foot spreading to other parts of your body, or coming back:

- avoid scratching the infected skin
- wash your feet every day and dry them carefully afterwards, especially between your toes
- use talcum powder to stop your feet getting sweaty
- wear shoes and socks that keep your feet cool and dry, such as cotton socks
- change to a different pair of shoes every 2 or 3 days
- wear a fresh pair of socks every day
- let the air get to your feet by taking off your shoes when at home
- try using antifungal dusting powders - you can buy these from your pharmacy

To avoid giving athlete's foot to other people:

- do not walk around barefoot – wear flip-flops in places like changing rooms and showers
- do not share towels, socks or shoes with other people



When to Get Help

Contact your GP if:

- your foot is red, hot or painful – this could be a more serious infection
- you have treated your foot for 1 week and it hasn't got better
- you have a weakened immune system, for example from cancer treatment or steroid therapy
- you have diabetes and have problems controlling your blood sugar level
- you have poor circulation (cold feet)
- you do not have much feeling in your feet

If you are worried that your or your child's condition is not getting better, or is getting worse, talk to your GP.



More information

For more information on athlete's foot or a medicine, talk to your pharmacist or look at the following websites:

NHS 111 Wales: <https://111.wales.nhs.uk/encyclopaedia/a/article/athletesfoot>

Patient UK: <https://patient.info/infections/fungal-infections/athletes-foot-tinea-pedis>

Medicines A-Z: <https://www.nhs.uk/medicines/>

Information from the above resources is included in this leaflet.



Mae'r daflen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg. This leaflet is also available in Welsh.

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