

RINGWORM OF SKIN AND SCALP

(Fungal infection-Tinea Corporis/Tinea Capitis)

<i>What is Ringworm?</i>	Ringworm is an infection caused by a fungus. It may appear on the scalp, body, groin (jock itch), or feet (athlete's foot).
<i>How is it spread?</i>	It is spread by direct skin-to-skin contact with infected animals or other objects contaminated with the fungus.
<i>What is the incubation period?</i>	Symptoms begin to appear about 4-14 days after contact with an infected person or object.
<i>What are the early signs?</i>	Ringworm of the scalp begins as a small pimple, which grows and spreads, leaving scaly patches of temporary baldness. Ringworm of the body first appears as flat spreading circular patches. The outside may be dry and scaly, or moist and crusted, while the skin on the inside tends to return to normal.
<i>What about contacts?</i>	If a child has come into contact with ringworm, inspect the skin for early signs of infection. Exclude the child from school only if symptoms appear.
<i>How long is the person contagious?</i>	Unless treated, ringworm is contagious as long as any infectious lesions are present or persist on contaminated materials. Lesions are no longer contagious 24 hours after beginning proper treatment by a physician.
<i>When is it OK to return to school?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 hours after proper treatment by a physician is started; exclude from showers and pools until all lesions are gone. • Ringworm of face and/or scalp should be treated with an oral medication that requires a doctor's prescription. • School may require an authorization from a doctor before the child returns to school.
<i>Other Important Information</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children can pass the infection on to others. • The law requires the school to send an ill child home. • It is important for parents to cooperate with school and local public health officials by taking the child to the doctor for proper diagnosis and treatment.

This fact sheet is not intended to replace the advice of your physician. Parents should contact their healthcare provider if they have concerns regarding their child's health. If you have general questions, you may contact a Kalamazoo County nurse at 373-5264 or 373-5267.

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