

Cause	Fungal infection that can affect skin on the body (tinea corporis), the scalp (tinea capitis), the groin area (tinea cruris or jock itch), or feet (tinea pedis or athlete's foot).
Symptoms	<p>Itchy, red, raised, scaly patches that may blister and ooze. The patches often have sharply-defined edges. They are often redder around the outside with normal skin tone in the center, sometimes creating the appearance of a ring. The skin may also appear unusually dark or light.</p> <p>If the scalp or beard is infected, bald patches may occur as affected hairs become gray and lusterless, eventually falling out, leaving baldness that may be permanent.</p> <p>If nails are infected, they may be discolored, thick, and even crumble.</p>
Spread	By direct contact with infected skin, pets, or farm animals, or by contact with contaminated items such as combs, unwashed clothing, shower, or pool surfaces.
Incubation Period	Usually, 4-10 days for the body; 10-14 days for the scalp
Period of Communicability	As long as lesions are present; viable fungus can persist on contaminated items for long periods.
Diagnosis	Based on the appearance of the skin. If tests are needed, the fungus may appear florescent when the skin is examined with a blue light (Wood's lamp) in a dark room. Microscopic examination of cells gathered through scraping the infected area may be made.
Treatment	Usually responds well to self-care with a fungicide (purchased over-the-counter) within 4 weeks. A severe or persistent infection may require treatment by a doctor. Anti-fungal pills may be given and is necessary if the hair is infected. Prescription anti-fungal skin medications, such as ketoconazole, are stronger than over-the-counter products and may be needed. Antibiotics may also be needed to treat related bacterial infections.
Prevention/Control	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Keep skin and feet clean and dry.2. Shampoo regularly, especially after haircuts.3. Do not share clothing, towels, hairbrushes, combs, headgear or other personal care items. Such items should be thoroughly cleaned and dried after use, especially concurrently with treatment.4. Wear sandals or shoes at gyms, lockers, and pools.5. Avoid touching pets with bald spots.
Exclusion	<p>Body: Until treatment has been started and sores covered.</p> <p>Scalp: Until 24 hours after treatment has been started.</p> <p>While under treatment, infected persons should be excluded from swimming pools and activities likely to lead to exposure of others.</p>