

TINEA PEDIS – ATHLETE’S FOOT

Tinea is an infection of the skin of the foot caused by a mold-like fungus that lives on dead tissues of the hair, toenails and outer skin layers. These fungi thrive in warm, dark and moist environments, such as the shoes, stockings, floors of community showers, locker rooms and swimming pools. They can be easily transmitted through direct contact through a cut or abrasion on the sole of the foot.



The most common type of Tinea results in persistent itching of the skin on the sole of the foot or between the toes. There will be associated redness and tenderness, and gradually the edges of the skin will begin to peel away and there may be a slight watery discharge present. Other types of Tinea present as a white scaling on the foot or a red itchy area contain little vesicles.

Tinea infections may disappear spontaneously or persist for years, with or without treatment. It may be necessary for the Podiatrist to take a skin scraping to determine the type of fungus causing the infection.

TREATMENT:

- Purchase of an anti-fungal cream from your General Practitioner(GP) or pharmacy (Canestan, Daktarin, Lamisil) and use as per the manufacturer’s instructions for at least two weeks. Use it on the affected areas in conjunction with the instructions below. If there is no improvement after two weeks consult your GP.

TO PREVENT REOCCURRENCE:

Other precautions are necessary to treat a current infection or to prevent reoccurrence.

- It is important to treat your socks and shoes with **anti-fungal powder** to prevent reinfection
- Wear **leather shoes** and **natural (cotton and wool)** socks to allow the feet to breathe. Avoid nylon socks!!
- Wash and dry your feet properly everyday.
- Do not share socks, shoes or towels with people already infected.
- Use surgical spirit between the toes with a cotton tip to prevent excess moisture or to dry the toe webbings after a shower.
- **Tea-tree oil** has anti-fungal and anti-biotic properties and may be used either to treat the initial infection or used regularly to prevent the infection reoccurring.
- Avoid going barefooted at public swimming pools and showers, wear flip flops or sandals instead.

