



Athlete's Foot

You have been given this leaflet because you have asked for athlete's foot treatment that you can get "over the counter" (OTC) from pharmacies. After a local and national public consultation on OTC medicines, we do not prescribe simple athlete's foot treatment anymore. Athlete's foot is a common condition and most people are able to treat themselves with OTC products.

Athlete's foot is a rash caused by a fungus which usually appears between the toes. It's not usually serious, but should be treated to stop it spreading to other parts of the body or other people.

How can I avoid triggers/ suggested lifestyle changes

Athlete's foot is caused by fungi growing and multiplying on the skin. You can reduce your risk of developing or spreading athlete's foot by:

- drying your feet gently but thoroughly after washing them, particularly the areas between your toes
- wearing cotton socks and shoes made of natural materials such as leather –this can allow your feet to "breathe"
- wear a fresh pair of socks, tights or stockings every day
- change your shoes every couple of days – this allows them to dry out between uses
- not walking around barefoot in public showers and locker rooms
- not sharing towels, socks and shoes with other people and washing towels regularly
- using talcum powder on your feet to stop them getting sweaty
- not using moisturiser between your toes, as this can help fungi multiply
- not scratching the infected skin and then touching other parts of your body
- If you or your child develops athlete's foot there is no need to stay off work or school.

How do I treat athlete's foot?

Athlete's foot is unlikely to get better on its own. It can usually be treated using antifungal treatments available from pharmacies without the need to see a doctor. "Generic" non-branded products usually offer the best value for money. **Speak to your pharmacist** - for advice if you're not sure which type of medicine is best for you and your symptoms.

Examples of medicines available to buy include

(Some products may have restrictions to use)

- Antifungal creams, gels, sprays or powders containing miconazole, clotrimazole, econazole or terbinafine or an antifungal and hydrocortisone (topical steroid).

When should I seek advice?

- treatments from a pharmacy don't work
- you're in a lot of discomfort
- your foot is red, hot and painful – this could be a more serious infection
- you have diabetes – foot problems can be more serious if you have diabetes
- you have a weakened immune system – for example, you've had an organ transplant or are having chemotherapy

For more information

- Visit your local pharmacy for advice

Be self-care aware

Find out more about self-care at www.nhs.uk