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PODIATRY DEPARTMENT



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ATHLETES FOOT (Tinea Pedis)

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WHAT IS ATHLETES FOOT?

Athletes foot is a common foot problem and is caused by a fungal infection of the skin on the feet.

The fungus that causes athletes foot are commonly found in small numbers on human skin, and may not cause any harm. Sometimes, they can “invade” the skin, grow and cause infection.

The fungus thrives in dark, warm, and moist areas, making the feet a perfect site for growth.

Athletes foot is very infectious and anyone can get it. It can be spread from person to person eg in showers or changing areas. Sometimes it can be transferred directly from an infected person by sharing towels, shoes, or hosiery.

SYMPTOMS

Common sites for infection are between the toes and in the arch of the foot. Visible signs of infection include:

Between toes:
Red, soggy, raw, peeling skin.

In the arch (or sole of foot):
Red rash, scaly skin, split skin, small blisters.

Patients may often have a severe itching or burning feeling.

TREATMENT

Several treatments are available and you should ask your local pharmacist for advice.

- **Anti-fungal creams** can be used to treat the sole of the foot, but should be avoided between the toes.
- An **Anti-fungal spray or powder** can also be used and works very well between the toes.

Follow the instructions supplied with these products carefully

PREVENTION

The following tips may help stop Athletes foot coming back:

- Wash your feet daily, and dry carefully between the toes.
- Wear clean cotton socks daily.
- Avoid walking barefoot; It is better to wear flip flops or sandals.
- Do not share towels, footwear or socks.
- Wear footwear that allows your feet to breathe easily and change every 2-3 days.
- Use anti-fungal spray/powder on feet, and in socks and shoes to help prevent athletes foot.

Please do not hesitate to contact your nearest podiatry clinic should you have any queries.