

Ringworm (Tinea)

What is ringworm?

A fungal infection that may affect the body, feet, or scalp

What are the signs or symptoms?

- Skin
 - ~ Red, circular patches with raised edges and central clearing
 - ~ Cracking and peeling of skin between toes
- Scalp
 - ~ Patchy areas of dandruff-like scaling with or without hair loss
 - ~ Redness and scaling of scalp with broken hairs or patches of hair loss

What are the incubation and contagious periods?

Unknown

How is it spread?

- Direct person-to-person contact by sharing combs, brushes, towels, clothing, or bedding
- Fungus infection spread by contact with infected humans, animals (eg, cats, dogs), or contaminated surfaces or objects
- Mildly infectious as long as the lesions are not treated

How do you control it?

- Early treatment of infected people.
- Examination of siblings and other household contacts.
- Do not share ribbons, combs, or hairbrushes.
- Cover skin lesions.



Child with ringworm of the scalp

PAUL HONIG, MD



Child with ringworm of the forearm

PUBLIC DOMAIN, COURTESY OF LARRY CORMAN, MD

What are the roles of the caregiver/teacher and the family?

- Report the infection to staff designated by the child care program or school for decision making and action related to care of ill children. That person, in turn, alerts possibly exposed family members and staff to watch for symptoms.
- Give medication as prescribed.
- On arrival and by observation while the child is in care, note any areas of the skin or scalp that might be infected.
- Do not permit the sharing of bike helmets, hats, combs, brushes, barrettes, scarves, clothing, bedding, or towels.
- Restructure dress-up corner by laundering an outfit before a second child wears it or having disposable outfits.

Exclude from group setting?

Yes.

Readmit to group setting?

Once treatment is started.

Comments

- Extreme measures of shaving head or wearing a cap are unnecessary.
- Ringworm of the scalp occurs most commonly in children between 3 and 9 years of age and seems to be more common in African American children.

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Pinworms

What are pinworms?

- Small, white, threadlike worms (0.25"–0.5" long) that live in the large intestine

What are the signs or symptoms?

Itching and irritation around the anal or vaginal area

What are the incubation and contagious periods?

- Incubation period: 1 to 2 months or longer from the time of ingesting the pinworm egg until an adult worm migrates to the anal area
- Contagious period: As long as the female worms are discharging eggs to the skin around the anus

How are they spread?

- Fecal-oral route.
- Directly or indirectly by sharing toys, bedding, clothing, toilet seats, or baths.
- Pinworm eggs remain infective for 2 to 3 weeks in indoor environments.
- Infestation with pinworms commonly clusters within families.

How do you control them?

- Good hand hygiene is the most effective method of prevention.
- Treatment with oral medication once or repeated in 2 weeks may be necessary for the whole family and the group of children who share a common environment.

What are the roles of the caregiver/teacher and the family?

- Report the infection to staff designated by the child care program or school for decision making and action related to care of ill children. That person, in turn, alerts possibly exposed family members and staff to watch for symptoms.
- Suspect pinworms if a child has intense itching around the anal or vaginal area. The worms may be seen with a flashlight as 0.5" long crawling threads in the area of the anus after the child has been asleep for about an hour.
- See a health professional for treatment recommendations.
- Bathe the child in the morning to remove a large proportion of eggs that are laid at night.
- Frequently change underwear, bedclothes, and bedsheets to decrease egg contamination.
- Wash children's hands directly after using the toilet, and also before hands are involved with putting something into their mouths.
- Wash toys frequently.
- Clean and sanitize surfaces used for eating, toileting, hand washing, food preparation, and diapering.

Exclude from group setting?

YES

Readmit to group setting?

- * Under treatment for 24 hours

Comments

- * Pinworms are not dangerous
- * Pinworms are relatively common among preschool- and school aged groups.
- * In the past, pinworms were found in 5 to 15% of the US population, but incidence has decreased.

