

Bristol Community Health

Patient information

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April 2009

Bristol Community Health

Podiatry Department

Fungal Infections



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Treatment

Skin

There are many creams and powders available from your local chemist. You can ask your podiatrist or pharmacist for advice on the most appropriate product for you.

Nails

Nails can be treated daily with the application of an antifungal lacquer which can be prescribed by your GP. The nail should also be reduced regularly by using the foot file. Your podiatrist can reduce your nail and show you how to do it.

Tablets are also available to treat fungal infections if the majority of nails are affected or the lacquer treatment has not been successful. Your podiatrist will advise you. All treatment should be continued for four weeks after the nail has cleared.

Fungal Infections

What are the causes of fungal infections?

There are many fungi that affect both the nails and the skin on the feet. Fungal infections commonly occur in the feet due to the warm moist environment which allows the fungus to breed.

Who is at risk?

Fungal infections can affect feet of all ages.

What are the symptoms of athlete's foot?

Skin

- Red itchy skin between the toes or on the arches of the feet.
- Skin that is flaky and scaly.
- Weeping rashes.
- Pain.

Nails

- Thick.
- Crumbly.
- Discoloured, commonly having a yellowy brown appearance or with white areas.

What can I do to prevent fungal infection?

- Make sure you dry your feet well after bathing.
- Wear hosiery made from natural fibres such as cotton and make sure you change your socks/tights etc., daily.
- If your shoes get wet make sure they are totally dry before wearing them again.
- Don't wear the same shoes every day, allow them to dry and air.
- Avoid tight footwear as they will not allow the air to circulate.
- Wear shoes that are made of leather as this allows the foot to breathe.

Do I have to treat my fungal infection?

It is not always necessary to treat fungal infections. People tend to choose treatment if the condition is uncomfortable or if they are concerned with the way it looks. You can discuss this with your podiatrist