

Jock Itch (Tinea Cruris)

Causes

“Jock itch” refers to any itching groin rash of men and is not a medical term. There are many causes for jock itch; when caused by a fungus, the rash is known as tinea cruris. The fungus causing tinea cruris is a microscopic plant that grows in the outer skin and prefers moisture. When this fungus infects the feet, it’s called athlete’s foot (tinea pedis).

Contagion

Fortunately, tinea cruris is not contagious. Direct person-to-person transmission is not a problem. The patient’s own case of athlete’s foot is the usual source of infection and re-infection of the groin.

Treatment

Cleanse your groin with plain water, as soap aggravates groin rashes. Tinea cruris is treated by applying the antifungal medicine Tinactin cream three times a day. Spread the medicine on sparingly and gently massage it in with your fingertips until it disappears. To prevent recurrences, continue the antifungal medicine for two weeks after the rash has cleared up.

Tinea cruris usually clears up promptly with antifungal medicines applied to the skin. If it doesn’t you may need two to three weeks of prescription treatment with the antifungal antibiotic, griseofulvin, taken orally. This can be ordered by your physician.

Tinea cruris is only one cause of groin itching. If your rash does not improve, return for further evaluation.

Prevention

Tinea cruris often comes back. Warmth and moisture encourage the fungus to grow. You can help prevent recurrences by drying thoroughly after bathing, wearing loose cotton underwear, and dusting a bland powder on your groin area once or twice daily. Change into dry clothes after swimming; do not sit long in a wet swimsuit.

Contact your physician if you have any questions or problems.