

Dear Parent or Guardian:

- A student in your child's class has ringworm.
 Your child may have ringworm.

WHAT IS RINGWORM?

Ringworm is an infection of the skin, caused by several types of fungi. The scalp, feet, groin, finger or toe nails can also be infected. Ringworm of the body usually looks like a flat, roundish sore, the edge of the sore may be dry and scaly or moist and crusted. As the affected area grows larger, the center portion often clears to a normal appearance. Ringworm of the scalp usually begins as a small pimple which expands with time, leaving scaly patches. Infected hairs become brittle and break off easily. Occasionally, raised moist and draining sores can occur. When finger/toe nails are affected, the nails become thickened, discolored, and brittle, or they may become chalky and disintegrate with time. An antifungal ointment is most often applied to the skin or antifungal medication in the form of liquid or tablets can be used to treat ringworm of the body, scalp or nails.

HOW DOES RINGWORM SPREAD?

Ringworm can be spread indirectly by contact with objects such as hair brushes, combs, barber clippers, clothing that has contaminated hair on it, and from locker room benches and shower stalls. The fungi which cause ringworm can also be spread by direct contact with infected people or with infected animals.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD HAS RINGWORM?

1. Watch your child and family members for signs of ringworm. See your health care provider if symptoms develop.
2. Your child may need to be given a medication or have a medicated ointment applied. If so, use the medication as directed. DO NOT send your child to school until the day after you start giving the medicine for ringworm of the scalp. If your child has ringworm of the body all sores must be covered either by clothing or a dressing such as gauze or a Band-Aid.
3. Inform the school staff if your child is being treated for ringworm.
4. Infected individuals should not share towels, hats, or clothing with others. Close physical contact with others should be avoided during the time when sores are present on exposed areas of the body.
5. For ringworm of the scalp, daily shampooing will help remove loose hairs which may be infective. Persons with severe cases of ringworm of the scalp should see the principal for permission to wear caps to cover their hair while at school.
6. Be sure to wash/disinfect anything that touches ringworm sores. Washcloths, towels, clothing, bed linens, caps, etc. should be laundered in hot water. Hair brushes, combs, rollers, etc. should not be shared and should be disinfected by covering with boiling water for at least 10 minutes after use.
7. For further information, contact the school nurse.