

# Tinea Cruris

Tinea cruris is an infection of the groin caused by a fungus. Treatment is easy and usually works well. The tips given below may help prevent recurrences.

## What is tinea cruris and how do you get it?

Tinea cruris is a fungal skin infection of the groin. Some types of fungus germs (fungi) are commonly found on human skin. They usually do no harm. However, if conditions are right they can 'invade' the skin, multiply and cause infection. The conditions fungi like best are warm, moist and airless areas of skin such as the groin.

## What are the symptoms of tinea cruris?

Typically the groin becomes itchy and irritable, mainly in the crease between the top of the leg and the genitals. It is more common in men, and the scrotum may also be itchy. A rash may appear in the groin, usually with a definite edge or border. Both groins are commonly affected. The rash often spreads a short way down the inside of both thighs.

Sometimes the infection spreads to the skin on other parts of the body (or may have first started in another area such as athlete's foot). Fungal infections do not usually go deeper than the skin into the body, and are not usually serious.

## What is the treatment for tinea cruris?

You can buy antifungal creams from pharmacies, or get one on prescription. Modern creams are good at clearing fungal skin infections such as tinea cruris. For best chance of success:

- Apply the cream to the surrounding 4-6 cm of normal skin in addition to the rash.
- Apply for as long as advised. This varies between the different creams, so read the instructions carefully. Although the rash may seem to go quite quickly, you still need to apply the cream for 1-2 weeks after the rash has gone. This is to completely clear the fungi from the skin, which will prevent the rash from returning.

An anti-fungal medicine is sometimes prescribed if the rash does not clear with a cream. or if the

rash is in many places on the skin in addition to the groin.

**The following tips may prevent tinea cruris recurring**

- Wash your groin daily, then dry thoroughly. Drying is perhaps the most important point. It is easy to put on underwear when your groin is not quite dry. The damp groin is then an ideal site for fungi to multiply. (A hairdryer is useful if you have hairy groins.)
- Change underwear daily. Fungi may multiply in flakes of skin in unwashed underwear.
- Check for athlete's foot. Is the skin between your toes itchy and flaky? Athlete's foot is common and the fungi may spread to the groin. The same creams are used for both infections.
- Do not share towels with people in communal changing rooms. Wash towels frequently.

Keep your own towel when you have a fungal skin infection to reduce the chance of passing on the fungus to others.