

Lifetime Medical Associates

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What is tinea versicolor?

Tinea versicolor is a rash caused by a fungus. The rash usually appears in the upper region of the trunk, but can also do it in the arms, face and neck. The rash will form many colored blotches of light brown, pink or white. Desquamation occurs occasionally within the eruption.

Heat and humidity increase the risk for tinea versicolor. The rash is more frequent in summer. It usually affects adolescents and young adults. Most people have no symptoms and the rash is treated with a cream or medication by mouth. It cannot not be acquired from another person, and you cannot transmit the infection to others. The rash goes away with treatment.

What are the symptoms of tinea versicolor?

Most people with this rash do not have symptoms, but in some cases there is itching.

What tests are needed?

After asking about your history and perform an examination, the doctor may scrape gently the eruption to get a sample to analyze under a microscope.

What treatment is necessary?

The rash is treated with a medicated cream or shampoo applied to the skin. In some cases you may need to take pills. Medication may be necessary medicine to relieve itching; these medications can cause sleepiness. Ask your doctor if you can drive while you take them.

Do

- Tell your doctor about other health problems you have, especially related to the liver or kidneys
- Show your doctor the medications you take regularly, both prescription and over the counter
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant
- Consult your physician if symptoms worsen or if you have fever

Don't

- Do not stop taking the medication or change the dose, even if you feel better, without the consent of your physician
- Do not drive, use machinery or power tools if you are taking medication for itching. Ask your doctor when you can drive or return to work

Recovery Time

With treatment, the rash usually lasts one to two weeks, but may last up to a month. The skin returns to normal within several months. It should not scar. The rash may return, requiring repeat treatment.

What can I do to keep from happening again?

- Eat a healthy diet, get enough sleep and plenty of exercise to strengthen your immune system
- Avoid excessive sweating, heavy clothing and hot, humid air
- Keep skin clean and dry; avoid excessive sweat

Further information can be found at:

American Academy of Dermatology

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Tel: 847-330-0230

Website: <http://www.aad.org>