



# Central Michigan District Health Department

*Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities*



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## Ringworm

### What is Ringworm?

Ringworm is an infection of the skin caused by a fungus. It gets its name from its appearance on the skin because the rash is often ring-shaped. Despite the name, ringworm is not caused by a worm.

### What are the signs and symptoms?

- A scaly ring-shaped area, typically on the buttocks, trunk, arms, and legs.
- A clear or scaly area inside the ring, perhaps with bumps whose color ranges from reddish, purplish, brown, or gray.
- A round, flat patch of itchy skin.
- Overlapping rings.
- Slightly raised, expanding rings.
- Itchiness.

### How is it spread?

You can get ringworm from people, animals, or places such as:

- Touching a person who has ringworm.
- Using items such as clothes, towels, or hairbrushes that were used by someone with a ringworm infection.
- Coming in contact with the hair or dander of an infected animal.
- Using common areas like gyms, shower stalls, and floors if used by someone with ringworm.

### What is the treatment for Ringworm?

A doctor can do a simple test to determine whether a rash is ringworm; but it is typically diagnosed by clinical presentation. Treatment is usually an antifungal cream applied to the site of infection or less commonly, antifungal pills taken by mouth.

### Ringworm can be prevented by:

- Keeping common-use areas clean.
- Use a floor and bath cleaner that contains a fungus-killing (called “fungicidal”) agent.
- Avoid physical contact with a person or animal that has ringworm.
- Do not share clothing, towels, hairbrushes, or other personal items.

*Please visit us at our website [www.cmdhd.org](http://www.cmdhd.org)*

**How can I guard against the spread of this disease?**

- Follow your doctor's advice for proper treatment.
- Keep your skin, hair, and nails clean and dry.
- Do not share towels, clothing, or hairbrushes.
- Wash towels and clothing in hot water and soap to destroy the fungus.
- Stay away from common areas such as community pools and gyms until your infection goes away.