

Tinea Versicolor

What Causes Tinea Versicolor?

Tinea versicolor is a harmless skin disorder caused by a yeast fungus living on normal skin. Usually this germ – which all of us have on our skin – grows sparsely and is not visible. In some individuals, it grows more actively. This causes the slightly scaling patches on the trunk, neck, or arms known as tinea versicolor. On untanned skin, tinea versicolor rash is pink to coppery tan. On tanned skin, the tinea versicolor patches are lighter because tanning doesn't occur in the rash areas. The failure to tan is temporary; the skin tans normally after the rash has cleared.

Tinea versicolor is not contagious. Tinea versicolor is more common in hot humid climates with excessive sweating, in persons with oily skin, and often comes back in the summertime.

Treatment

Although many treatments will temporarily clear tinea versicolor, we do not have a permanent cure. Tinea versicolor – being caused by a normal skin inhabitant – tends to recur. When tinea versicolor recurs, repeat the treatment you've found to succeed. We may prescribe a number of different treatments, since more than one approach may be necessary. Any of the following treatments will clear more than 90 percent of cases of tinea versicolor.

1. **Selenium sulfide suspension**, 2.5 percent, applied to the affected area before showering. Massage in well and allow to remain on the skin for 10 minutes before rinsing off. Repeat once daily for 7 days. Selenium sulfide may also be used as a single treatment; apply it at bedtime, leave it on overnight, and shower it off the next day. Repeat once a month until clear.
2. Certain prescription antifungal creams, applied thinly once or twice daily, are an effective but expensive treatment.
3. Your clinician may prescribe oral medication which can eradicate the germ quite effectively. It is very important to take this medication as directed.

In an emergency go to Mount Nittany Medical Center or call 911 for an ambulance.

Test Results and Advice Nurse

Please call the nurse for test results and advice: 863-4463

Appointments

Appointments can be made online via the UHS website, by phone or in person. If you are unable to keep your appointment, please call and cancel. Otherwise you will be charged for the visit.

To schedule or cancel appointments call 863-0774 or schedule your appointment online through the UHS website

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