

# RECONSTRUCTIVE FOOT & ANKLE INSTITUTE, LLC

Daniel D. Michaels, DPM, MS, DABFAS & Associates

www.rfainstitute.com

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## ATHLETE'S FOOT:

Athlete's foot is a fungus infection that usually starts between the toes. However, it can also involve other areas of the foot and even the toenails. Fungus is everywhere and some people have genetic resistance to this and others don't. The fungus that causes athlete's foot can also cause toenail fungus.

Fungus is a common mold that thrives in dark, warm, moist places. Fungus infections commonly attack your feet as shoes provide an environment that is conducive to fungal growth. Fungal problems can be a result of environment (socks, shoes, heat and humidity) or weakened immunity (diseases such as diabetes). Chronic (long standing) fungal infections are seen most commonly in adults, while acute (short lived) fungal infections are seen more often in children. Initially the symptoms include moist, malodorous, cracking, peeling, red and itching skin. Sometimes this can cause small numerous blisters on the mid arch of the foot.

Topical applications of over-the-counter or prescription creams will usually clear the infection on the skin. In some cases, oral anti-fungal medications are needed to clear the infection. Once a patient has been infected, the disease may recur intermittently. The following are important foot care instructions for those who have been affected by athlete's foot:

1. Wash the feet carefully with soap and water.
2. Dry feet carefully, especially between toes.
3. Use FungiFoam Cream daily
4. Try using spray deodorant/antiperspirant once or twice a day on your feet to decrease sweating.
5. Wear only synthetic socks, not cotton. Cotton socks absorb moisture really well and since your feet have 500,000 sweat glands each and produce a pint of sweat each per day you don't want something that absorbs water near your skin. You want synthetic, wool or alpaca fibers to make up the majority of your sock mass. Never wear cotton socks.
6. Wear a different pair of shoes every day. They need time to air out and dry after a day of surrounding your foot that produces a pint of sweat daily.
7. Change socks 2 times a day.

Adhering to these home care "tips" will help to prevent another episode of athlete's foot.

The best topical antifungal we have found for athlete's foot is FungiFoam Cream which is available in our retail store at our front desk. Apply to affected area 2 times a day for 1-2 weeks. If you have dry skin then we recommend using this daily for the rest of your life. This will keep your skin moisturized and your feet free from fungus. During the active athlete's foot infection use the FungiFoam twice a day and then when it resolves use daily after showering for the rest of your life as this will have to be applied chronically as you most likely have no genetic resistance to fungal infections. This can help prevent nail fungal infections as well.

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**1150 Professional Court, Suite C, Hagerstown, MD 21740**

**2100 Old Farm Drive, Suite D, Frederick, MD 21702**

T: 301-797-8554 · F: 301-797-9228