North Monterey County Unified School District

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RINGWORM (TINEA) – FACT SHEET

Ringworm of the body (Tines Corporis), of the scalp (Tines Capitis), and of the foot (Athlete's Foot or Tinea Pedis) should always be seen by a physician for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up (if needed).

Definition and Cause:
Ringworm is not a worm. It is a shallow infection of the skin caused by a fungus. It may be ring-shaped.

Signs and Symptoms:
Skin rash begins as small, red circle that progressively becomes larger, with central clearing.

- On the feet, there is often cracking and peeling of skin between the toes.
- Often there is mild itching or pain

Scalp ringworm shows patchy areas of dandruff-like scaling, sometimes with redness.

- Sometimes there is hair loss in that region or broken hairs.
- A "Kerion" is an advanced form that has a red, swollen, bald area of the scalp.

Transmission:

- Ringworm is mildly contagious for as long as the fungus remains present in the lesion. The fungus is no longer present once the lesion has begun to shrink.
- Spores from ringworm fungus are found on many objects in our environment (e.g., combs, towels) and surfaces. Spores are also carried around by people and animals with no obvious skin lesions.

Prevention:

- Early treatment of infected people and inspection/treatment of their household contacts
- Not sharing combs, towels, ribbons/barrettes, hairbrushes, bike helmets, hats, scarves, bedding.
- Proper laundering of clothes and linen.
- Covering skin lesions.

Medical Treatment:
Treatment of the skin is through applying a topical antifungal cream or ointment (e.g., Lotrimin). Severe scalp lesions require an oral anti-fungal medication (e.g., Griseofulvin).

Home Management:

- Contact your child's physician for diagnosis and treatment.
- Your child can attend school once treatment has started. Cover affected area with clean dressing or clothing.
- Encourage your child not to share combs, towels, ribbons/barrettes, hairbrushes, bike helmets, hats, scarves, bedding.
- Contact your child's physician if no visible improvement 2 weeks after treatment is started.