

# The Record

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*Active*  
**FOOT & ANKLE  
CARE CENTER**  
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## SELF HELP

*Coping with  
life's problems*

■ **SUBJECT:** Avoid  
athlete's foot



Keeping feet cool and dry is one way of avoiding athlete's foot, caused by fungi that grow in warm, moist places.

Those active in sports are most prone to the condition, says Dr. Richard Braver, a sports podiatrist on the staffs of Englewood and Pascack Valley hospitals.

There are two types of athlete's foot, Braver says. The acute appears almost overnight. Blisters can pop out on any part of the foot, and the skin appears red and raw. There is also swelling. The condition should clear after three days of application of a topical cream. The chronic type appears as dry, scaly skin on the sole of the foot and should clear after a two-week application of a topical cream.

According to the July 1990 Consumer Reports Health Letter, the latest and most effective non-prescription topical medications belong to a class called imidazoles. These include clotrimazole (brand name is Lotrimin AF) and miconazole (Micatin). Nearly as effective is tolnaftate (Aftate, Tinactine, and others).

Other non-prescription antifungal medications are less effective and include clioquinol (Toroform and Vioform), povidone-iodine (Betadine, Pharmadine, and Povadyne) and undecylenic acid (Cruex, Desenex, and others).

For relief of itching, Braver says, apply a non-prescription cortisone cream (one brand name is Cortaid). If this doesn't work in a couple of weeks, check with your doctor.

Braver gives these tips:

- When bathing, make sure you dry between your toes. If you have athlete's foot, have towels cleaned. The condition can spread to the groin, ears, and scalp.
- Wear acrylic fiber socks that help to draw sweat away from the skin. Cotton socks tend to retain moisture.
- Wear shoes that breathe well — not plastic ones. Canvas sneakers are fine. Alternate pairs of shoes.
- If your feet sweat a lot, apply a roll-on antiperspirant.

— JANET GEMIGNANI