Ringworm of the Scalp
(Tinea Capitis)

Tinea Capitis is also called scalp ringworm. It is a fungal infection of the skin on the scalp seen mainly in children.

CAUSES
Tinea Capitis spreads from:
- Other people.
- Pets (cats and dogs) and animals.
- Bedding, hats, combs or brushes shared with an infected person
- Theater seats that an infected person sat in.

SYMPTOMS
Tinea capitis causes the following symptoms:
- Flaky scales that look like dandruff.
- Circles of thick, raised red skin.
- Hair loss.
- Red pimples or pustules.
- Swollen glands in the back of the neck.
- Itching.

DIAGNOSIS
A skin scraping or infected hairs will be sent to test for fungus. Testing can be done either by looking under the microscope (KOH examination) or by doing a culture (test to try to grow the fungus). A culture can take up to 2 weeks to come back.

TREATMENT
- Tinea capitis must be treated with medicine by mouth to kill the fungus for 2 to 4 months.
- Medicated shampoos (ketoconazole or selenium sulfide shampoo) may be used to decrease the shedding of fungal spores from the scalp.
- Steroid medicines are used for severe cases that are very inflamed in conjunction with antifungal medication.
- It is important that any family members or pets that have the fungus be treated.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS
- Be sure to treat the rash completely – follow your caregiver's instructions. It can take a month or more to treat. If you do not treat it long enough, the rash can come back.
- Watch for other cases in your family or pets.
- Do not share brushes, combs, barrettes, or hats. Do not share towels.
- Combs, brushes, and hats should be cleaned carefully and natural bristle brushes must be thrown away.
- It is not necessary to shave the scalp or wear a hat during treatment.
- Children may attend school once they start treatment with the oral medicine.
- Be sure to follow up with your caregiver as directed to be sure the infection is gone.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:
- Rash is worse.
- Rash is spreading.
- Rash returns after treatment is completed.
- The rash is not better in 2 weeks with treatment. Fungal infections are slow to respond to treatment. Some

redness may remain for several weeks after the fungus is gone.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION IF:

- The area becomes red, warm, tender, and swollen.
- Pus is oozing from the rash.
- You or your child has an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C), not controlled by medicine.

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