

## Put away fungal diseases during the sweaty months

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- Dr.Deepa Krishna Murthy -

**During the summer season, there is usually a rise in the cases of fungal infections due to the increased humidity. Fungi, which grows all around us as well as within the body,** thrives in moist and humid environments and can multiply and grow more easily during the summer season. Fungal infections more commonly occur in the crevices of the body where it is more likely for sweat to be produced and trapped, for example, in the armpits, between the thighs, between the toes or under the breasts. If one is not careful with their hygiene and spends a long time with the moisture trapped between the folds of skin, they are at a high risk of developing a fungal disease. The following are some symptoms of fungal infection:

- Itching or burning sensation
- Dryness
- Cracking or Peeling
- Scaliness
- Red patches

If any of the above symptoms do not go away by washing and moisturizing, there is a possibility that it could be a fungal infection. The following are the most common fungal infections witnessed during humid seasons -

- Athlete's Foot

This infection affects the feet and usually starts from in between the toes. Wearing socks for long hours, re-using socks, wearing closed shoes in the hot climate for very long. Maintain impeccable hygiene if you use the swimming pool and public bathroom during the humid climates as the fungi are likely to be found there. If you start to experience redness, blistering, itchiness in between your toes, apply a topical anti-fungal cream. Visit the doctor if symptoms are severe and cannot be managed by a topical cream.

Prevention: During the summer season, it is best to allow the feet to breathe freely as much as possible. Opt for open-toe footwear. If you tend to sweat often, try to use powders and regularly wipe to avoid fungal growth

- Ringworm

Named after the way that this disease looks, ringworm is highly contagious and can spread quickly across your skin. Symptoms are rashes that appear in the form of red circles. The skin can become raised, itchy, and flaky. Ringworm can spread through human contact, soil, and even animals. It can usually be controlled and treated easily with an anti-fungal cream.

Prevention: Hygiene is key to prevent ringworm. Ensure you clean and dry yourself after playing with pets, or playing out in the garden. Parents must take extra care of their children's hygiene during this time.

- Jock's Itch

This infection occurs between the inner thighs, around the groin or buttocks area, and can occur to both men and women. The infection usually presents with continual itching, chafing, redness, scaliness, or a rash.

Prevention: Choose loose-fitted, cotton underwear, and more breathable clothing during the summer. Avoid synthetic material. Avoid wearing the same clothes for very long especially, if it has been drenched in sweat as this will promote the growth of fungi. Take more showers and dry yourself properly throughout the day depending on your activity levels.

Fungal infections depend largely on moisture to survive. If any parts of your body are prone to excessive sweating, or if you are very active, the foolproof way to avoid infection is by maintaining impeccable hygiene. Clean yourself regularly and keep your skin dry. Choose loose and cotton-based attire that will help absorb sweat rather than create an extra barrier outside your skin. Change your clothes regularly, and avoid repeat usage of clothes during the hot months. A lot of people use the swimming pool during the summer season - ensure that you do not sit in your wet swimming costume for very long, maintain good

hygiene when using the public bathrooms, wear clean and dry footwear. Keep your immune system at its best by keeping yourself hydrated so that your body can cope with any infections.

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