

HEALTH ALERT!

It's Ringworm Season

(NAPS)—Parents and caregivers of African-American children may be able to protect their kids from a condition that can lead to scarring and hair loss—ringworm.

Contrary to its name, ringworm is not actually a worm, but a common, highly contagious fungal infection of the scalp. It's spread through direct contact with anything that comes in contact with the infected area of the scalp and hair such as brushes and combs, hats, bedding, etc. The condition is most common in African-American boys age 3 to 9, but has been diagnosed in females, infants, toddlers, older children and adults.

Ringworm often appears in the hair as dandruff-like flakes, or as scaly patches on the child's scalp. However, the symptoms can sometimes be hard to see or difficult to recognize.

To help protect your children from ringworm, doctors recommend the following:

- Teach children not to share brushes, hats, hooded sweatshirts or any other items that come in contact with the head.
- Tell children to let you know if their scalp itches or if they notice dandruff-like flakes.
- Wash items that touch the hair like combs, brushes, hats, etc. in hot soapy water.
- Avoid tight braids and cornrows which may stress the scalp.

If you notice signs of ringworm on your child, it's important to see a doctor or dermatologist right away. The condition is easily treatable with oral medications such as Grifulvin V, (griseofulvin oral suspension), which is the only oral-suspension antifungal product approved by



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the FDA for tinea capitis (ringworm of the scalp) in children. The drug is the most prescribed treatment for tinea capitis by pediatricians and dermatologists.

It is important to know that tinea capitis cannot be treated effectively with medications like shampoos or creams, which are placed directly on the scalp, because the fungus grows inside the hair shaft. This is why the hair may become fragile and breaks off. Grifulvin penetrates the hair shaft and is therefore able to get rid of the ringworm.

The medication has an active ingredient that has been used to treat ringworm for over 50 years, and because it's available in pleasant tasting liquid formation, it's generally easier to give to children.

For more tips and information call 800-426-7762.