

# What is the Cause of this Unusual Rash?



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## Introduction

**T**his 55-year-old man had a below-knee amputation due to peripheral vascular disease. One year post-amputation he developed an asymptomatic red scaly rash at the amputation site. He was concerned that the rash was spreading up his leg.

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## What is the cause of this rash?

This patient has developed a fungal infection (also known as ringworm or tinea). When it occurs on the feet, it is known as athlete's foot.

## How would you confirm the diagnosis?

In this case, fungal scrapings were taken with a small #15 scalpel blade and sent to the mycology laboratory. The scrapings were initially examined with a potassium hydroxide preparation under the microscope. Some of the scrapings were also cultured, and grew *Trichophyton rubrum* (a common cause of athlete's foot).

## What is the treatment?

Topical therapy with an antifungal cream (e.g. clotrimazole) applied twice daily for 6 weeks will usually clear the rash. However, recurrence is common. For patients who do not respond to topical agents, oral therapy with terbinafine for 3–4 weeks is recommended. <sup>1</sup>



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