








Zoonoses fact Sheet - Ringworm

<p>What is Ringworm?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ringworm is a fungal infection of the skin. It is not a worm. • It is called ringworm because it makes a 'ring' of hair loss on skin. • Many different fungi can cause ringworm, such as <i>Microsporum</i> spp. and <i>Tricophyton</i> spp. 	<p>What is a fungus?</p> <p>Fungi are a group of simple parasite organisms that include mushrooms and mold.</p> <p>They are partly like plants and partly like animals.</p> <p>Ringworm fungi are too small to be seen with the naked eye, but bigger than bacteria.</p>
<p>Where does it live?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ringworm fungi are in the environment all the time. • People's immune systems can usually stop ringworm from being a problem so we do not know ringworm is around. • Ringworm forms spores, which are like eggs. These spores can stay in the environment for a long time. The spores survive best when it is warm and moist. There is more ringworm in the tropics and in the wet season. • When dogs or people get sick from ringworm, they make a lot more spores and can spread the disease to others more easily. 	
<p>How does Ringworm make dogs and people sick?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ringworm fungus grows in the skin. • It destroys hair, making a round bald patch. • The body fights the fungus in the skin, making it red and itchy. 	 
<p>How do we treat ringworm?</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash affected dogs with antifungal shampoos like malaseb, selsun, or triocil every day for 1-2 weeks. Also wash all unaffected household dogs once. • See the vet for antifungal tablets and/or cream. • Wash floors and bedding in 10 parts water to one part bleach. Throw out old dog beds or leave in the sun for a few days. • Washing hands after touching dogs stops the ringworm getting into the skin. • Good food and a strong family help dogs fight the ringworm.   	

Source: **Dr Sam Phelan, Dog Health Programs in Indigenous communities, an Environmental Health Practitioner's Guide, AMRRIC, 2010**