



Specialty Medicine Compounding Pharmacy

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# Competent Compounding

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## Feline Ringworm

In cats, ringworm is the most common fungal infection of the skin. Despite the name, it is not caused by a worm.

In fact, a group of parasitic fungal organisms called dermatophytes are responsible for this disease. There are different types but the dermatophyte that is most common in cats is *Microsporum canis* (*M. Canis*). Ringworm may affect the skin, claws or hair. This condition presents itself as skin lesions with circular patches of hair loss that are covered with crust.



There are two ways a cat can get ringworm: direct exposure with an infected animal, or from the contaminated environment (bedding, furniture...etc). Extra care and caution should be taken if you have a cat with ringworm, because it is contagious. It may be passed on from cat to cat, cat to dog, cat to human...etc.

Once a cat is diagnosed with ringworm, treatment is required to speed up the recovery. Various medications are used to treat this condition. Your veterinarian may prescribe your pet a shampoo or lime sulfur dip. When using the dip, the cat should not be allowed to lick itself before it dries because it may cause vomiting. In terms of bathing, it should be done every four to six days for approximately two to four weeks. An oral medication may be used also. The most commonly used agent is griseosulvin, an antifungal and that inhibits the growth of the fungi. It comes as a tablet that is taken twice daily. It is best given with a meal with a high fat content. Other antifungal drugs such ketoconazole, itraconazole, and terbinafine may

be used. However, it is important to know if your cat is pregnant before starting therapy because some of these antifungals are contraindicated in pregnant cats and should be avoided.

There are some other measures that should be taken when you have a cat infected with ringworm to prevent transmission to others. The most important is to avoid contact with the animal and clean the environment. Disinfecting surfaces and bedding is crucial as well as grooming equipment.

There is a ringworm vaccine, Fel-O-Vax® MC-K available. It is a series of three shots and is specific for the dermatophyte *M. Canis*. Based on studies by the manufacturer Fort Dodge, it is recommended for cats that are healthy and are over four months of age. The first injection is administered and then followed by a second one 12 to 16 days later. The third and final injection is scheduled 26 to 30 days after the second one.

Feline ringworm is an easily treatable infection. If you see patches of skin without any hair in your cat, your pet may have ringworm. Contact your veterinarian to ensure they get the best treatment and to prevent others from getting infected.

For more info:

Center for Disease Control:  
[www.cdc.gov/healthypets/pdf/your\\_cat\\_your\\_health.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/pdf/your_cat_your_health.pdf)

European Scientific Counsel Companion Animal Parasites:

[http://www.esccap.org/121/Guidelines/English/G2\\_Eng.htm#staff](http://www.esccap.org/121/Guidelines/English/G2_Eng.htm#staff)



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## Allergy vs. Intolerance

It is important to be able to distinguish a real allergy from an intolerance because in medicine, it dictates the medications that can be used safely in you.

In an allergic reaction, the immune system is activated. This may occur in response to various things ranging from pollen to food and drug products. These reactions normally occur very rapidly after the contact with the allergen. Allergic reactions are not all the same however. An allergen, the trigger, may cause a wide array of complaints that may vary from a runny nose, sinusitis, earache or runny eyes to itching of the skin, eczema and shortness of breath. In case of a severe allergic reaction to a drug, consider wearing a medical alert necklace or bracelet and carrying an alert card in your wallet that lists your drug allergies.

An intolerance does not involve an immune reaction. It can be described as an adverse effect of a drug. The most common include stomach upset or drowsiness. In the case of medication intolerances or adverse reactions, the drug may be continued by changing the regimen. For example, if ibuprofen causes a stomach upset, taking it with food might alleviate that problem. Or the doctor may lower the dose. In some instances, drug intolerances simply disappear as drug therapy continues.

Therefore, allergy and intolerance are two distinct conditions and distinguishing between them is important in a clinical setting especially because it determines what drugs may be used in you.

## Lactose Intolerance

Lactose intolerance affects between 30 to 50 million Americans. It is defined as the inability to digest considerable amounts of the major sugar in milk, lactose due to a deficiency of the

enzyme lactase (the enzyme responsible for lactose digestion).

Symptoms of lactose intolerance include discomfort upon consumption of milk products. The most common complaints are nausea, bloating, gas and diarrhea that usually occur after half an hour to 2 hours after ingestion. However the severity of these symptoms are person-dependant because different people tolerate varying amounts of lactose. Treating this condition is easy. People may avoid lactose-containing products or take lactase enzyme, which is available as a tablet or liquid.

Many people don't realize that lactose is used as a filler or excipient in many prescription products and capsules. Usually, it is not in significant amounts to cause discomfort for the average lactose intolerant person. However, in the severe lactose intolerant population, these products are important to avoid unless a patient is willing to take a lactase product to prevent the discomfort. In those who wish to avoid lactose, they should inform their pharmacy about their preference and another filler or excipient is chosen instead of lactose.

To read more: <http://digestive.niddk.nih.gov/ddiseases/pubs/lactoseintolerance/>

## Flu Shots Given at Specialty Medicine Compounding Pharmacy

Our annual flu shot program will kick off on Wednesday, October 1, at 9am. Flu shots will be on a walk-in basis with no appointment necessary. Flu shots will be \$25 and free to patients with Medicare (identification and Medicare card are necessary). Flu shots will be given on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9am to 5pm. Please note, that the pharmacy closes at 12:30pm for lunch and reopens at 1pm. There will be no flu shots given over the lunch break.