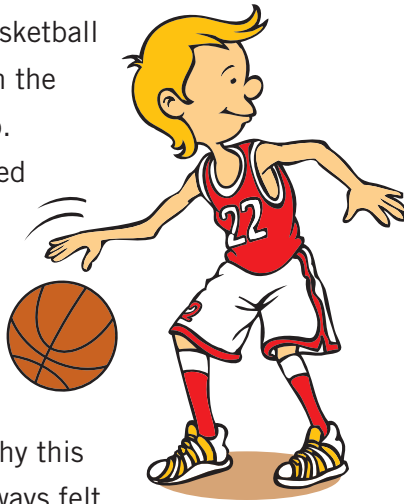


I HAVE A FUNGI FEELING

Do I have acne? Is it a choice Handout, ages 11-13

Kwik Lee made the basketball team! He's currently in the summer training camp. Recently his feet started feeling dry and cracking. Sometimes they even itch and sting. He noticed the sides started getting red and had no idea why this was happening. He always felt really embarrassed and hated showing his feet. Every day after practice, the team went out for lunch, hung out, and then went home. Kwik was too embarrassed about his feet to change in the locker room, so he kept his sneakers on until he went home and showered.



Kwik went to see the skin doctor (called a dermatologist), Dr. Releef, and asked him, "What's wrong with me?!"

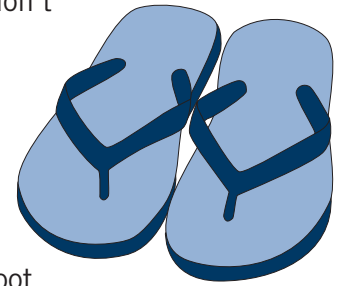
The dermatologist looked at Kwik's feet and determined he had what is commonly known as athlete's foot. A common fungal infection of the skin.

"FUNGUS. So gross. So...dirty. Now I am really going to have to keep my basketball shoes on all the time," Kwik said.

"Kwik, do you keep your shoes on for a long time after practice?" asked Dr. Releef.

Kwik was a bit hesitant but answered, "Yes. Usually we go out for pizza and then hang out for a few hours before going home. I used to take my shoes off and go straight to the shower in bare feet, but now I'm too embarrassed to even change my shoes because I don't want people to see my feet."

Dr. Releef said, "Ah, okay. I see. Well, that is what is making it worse. Athlete's foot is contagious and you probably caught it when you went barefoot to the showers. It is very common and can be easily treated. Staying in sweaty socks and shoes just makes it worse though. You should always wear flip flops in public showers and at pools as well as change out of sweaty socks and shoes as soon as possible because fungus likes warm wet areas. And don't be embarrassed, I see great athletes and non-athlete's come in all the time with athlete's foot! It doesn't mean you're dirty at all. In fact, you can get athlete's foot right after you shower."



Kwik wasn't completely convinced, "Well, how can I treat it?"

"First go to the pharmacy and try an over the counter antifungal cream. Over the counter means you don't need my prescription. Talk to the pharmacist and your parents so they can help you choose a cream. If that doesn't work, come back here. We can take another look, and I can write you a prescription if needed."

Kwik felt better knowing it was common and that he could go to the store to buy some cream.

When Kwik was leaving the doctor's office, he saw another teammate, Duncan Hoopz, who looked really embarrassed to be seen.

Kwik knew how he felt and smiled and said, "Hey. Funny seeing you here!"

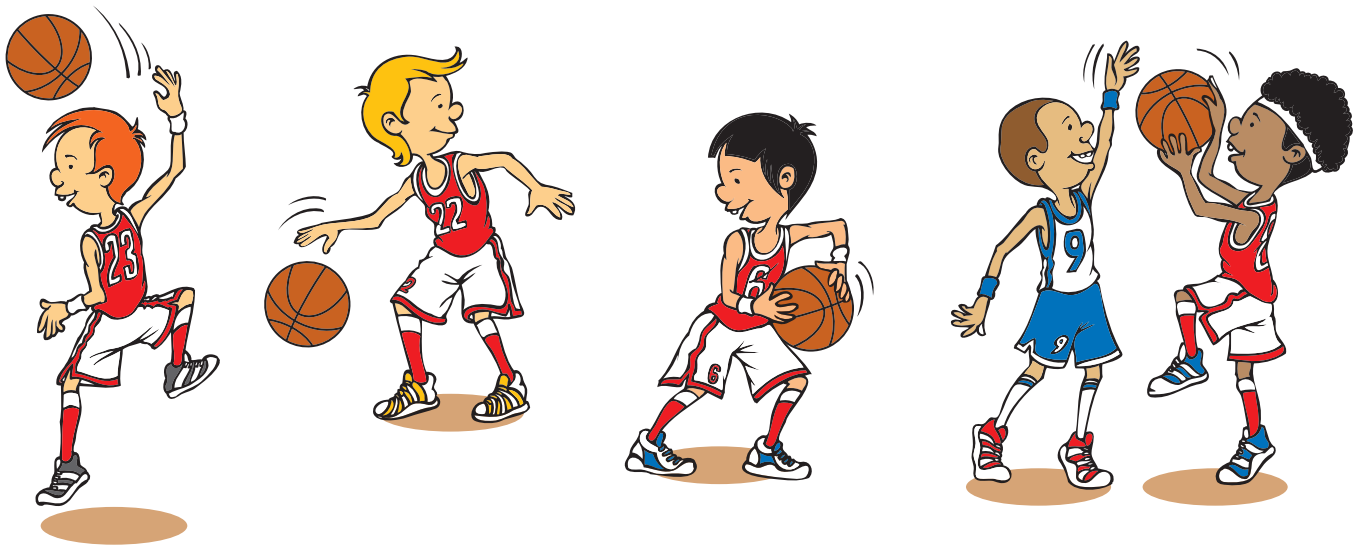


“Ha...yeah...I’m just...ummm,” said Duncan.

“Hey. I just found out I have athlete’s foot, a fungal infection on my skin. Not a big deal though—probably got it in the locker room because I wasn’t using flip flops. I’m going to go pick up some cream at the store...and some flip flops,” Kwik said, trying to make Duncan feel more comfortable.

Duncan let out a deep sigh, “Yeah. Actually, I’m back to see Dr. Releef because I got a nail fungus from not wearing flip flops at the pool! Ha! Now we know: flip flops are important! See ya at practice!” Duncan and Kwik laughed.

Kwik left, went to the store with his dad, and bought some flip flops and antifungal cream. Things were looking better already!



ACTIVITY

Circle True or False for the following questions according to the information given in the text.

- | | | |
|---|------|-------|
| 1. Only dirty people get skin fungus. | TRUE | FALSE |
| 2. You should wear flip flops in public showers, locker rooms, and at the pool. | TRUE | FALSE |
| 3. A skin doctor is called a dermatologist. | TRUE | FALSE |
| 4. You can't treat athlete's foot. | TRUE | FALSE |
| 5. You can get nail infections from not wearing flip flops. | TRUE | FALSE |
| 6. You should change out of sweaty socks and shoes as soon as possible. | TRUE | FALSE |