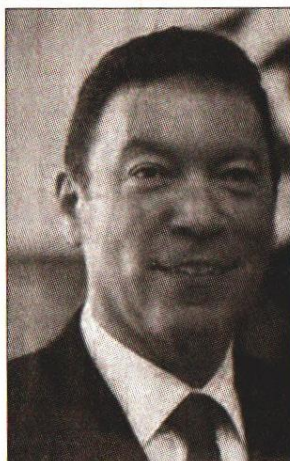


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Dr Hani el Nazer

Skin diseases a cause for anxiety

SKIN diseases are so dangerous that their effect goes beyond physical affliction to cause tension and anxiety in people who have them.

Athletes are prone to picking up skin infections because of the conditions which they are exposed while pursuing their activities.

Fungal diseases are among the skin disorders that affect athletes. They are often exposed to infection with dermatophyte, such as tinea pedis, according to Dr Hani el Nazer, Professor of Dermatology and former

head of the National Research Centre. "Tinea pedis is a most common skin disease among athletes.

There are several reasons for this. Wearing socks and sports shoes for long periods. This is accompanied by sweating and overheating in the toes and feet." Dr el Nazer said.

Walking barefoot around swimming pools as well as using towels belonging to infected people can also lead to fungal infection. Washing one's feet without drying them well can also bring on a

skin infection. The symptoms are redness of the skin between some of the toes accompanied by an itchy feeling. The disease can then extend to include all the toes of the foot, Dr el Nazer said. He added that the disease can be accompanied by severe pain. Topical antifungal powder works well in getting rid of the disease.

Dr el Nazer also warns against wearing underwear of infected people to avoid a skin disease known as tinea cruris. Otherwise using soap and water excessively and

not drying the skin well after washing may lead to the same condition.

The symptoms start in the form of a red halo on the skin on the upper thighs which then extends to the genitals accompanied by itching dermatitis.

Prevention depends on drying the skin well after a bath as well as avoiding the use of towels of infected people or wearing their underwear. Dr el Nazer says treatment is based on using several types of antifungal lotions and ointments.