

**Oral antifungals effective for toenail onychomycosis****Clinical Question**

How effective are oral antifungal treatments for toenail onychomycosis?

**Bottom Line**

There was high-quality evidence that oral azole and terbinafine treatments were more effective for achieving mycological cure and clinical cure for onychomycosis compared to placebo. When compared directly, terbinafine was probably more effective than azoles and likely not associated with excess adverse events (both moderate-quality evidence). Low-certainty evidence showed griseofulvin to be less effective than terbinafine in terms of both mycological and clinical cure, while griseofulvin and azole probably had similar efficacy (moderate-quality evidence). Griseofulvin was associated with more adverse reactions than azoles (moderate-quality) and terbinafine (low-quality). No study addressed quality of life. The evidence in this review applied for treatments of at least 12 weeks in duration.

**Caveat**

Only a limited number of studies reported adverse events, and the severity of the events was not taken into account, which limited the direct application to clinical practice. Not all comparisons measured recurrence rate, and the available evidence was based on low- to very low-quality evidence.

**Context**

Toenail onychomycosis is common, and treatment is taken orally or applied topically. Oral treatments appear to have shorter treatment times and better cure rates.

**Cochrane Systematic Review**

[Kreijkamp-Kaspers S et al. Oral antifungal medication for toenail onychomycosis. Cochrane Reviews, 2017, Issue 7. Art. No.: CD010031.DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD010031.pub2.](#) This review contains 48 studies

involving 10,200 participants.

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**Pearls No. 574, March 2018, written by Brian R McAvoy. C49**

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