

scabies

WHAT IS SCABIES?

Scabies is an extremely itchy skin infection caused by the mite *Sarcoptes scabiei*. It is highly contagious and is transmitted sexually and non-sexually to all members of a household.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Intense itching, especially at night.
- Tiny blisters appear mainly in skin folds: between fingers, on elbows, hands, wrists, axillary (armpits), female breasts, male genitals, beltline, thighs, abdomen.
- In infants, head, neck, palms and soles of feet may be involved.
- Small, red raised areas, and/or fluid filled blisters in early cases.
- Later, wavy, threadlike, slightly raised gray-white burrows. These are serpentine lines caused by the mite.

INFECTIOUS PERIOD

Until mites and eggs are destroyed by treatment.

HOW IT IS SPREAD?

Direct skin to skin contact with undergarments, bedclothes, towels that were contaminated by infested persons immediately beforehand.

INCUBATION

2-6 weeks in persons with no previous exposure.
1-4 days after re-exposure.

TREATMENT

- The primary objective is the relief of the itch and the elimination of the mites.
- All family members and close contacts must be treated with prescribed shampoo and/or lotion and used as directed.

CONTROL MEASURES

- Keep at home until 24 hours after treatment.
- All family members and close contacts should be treated at the same time.
- Bedding, towels, clothing worn next to the skin within the last

48 hours should be machine washed in hot water and dried in hot dryer for 20 minutes OR store items in sealed plastic bag for 7 days.

Prevention is difficult. This sheet gives general information. It is NOT to be used as medical diagnosis in any specific case.



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