



Scabies

What is Scabies? Scabies is caused by a very tiny parasite, a mite barely 1/100 inch across, and almost invisible to the naked eye. The female mite burrows into the uppermost layers of the skin, making a narrow tunnel in which she deposits her eggs. These eggs hatch in a few weeks and the young mites migrate to the surface of the skin. After they breed, the males die. The young females move freely over the surface of the skin, ready to make new tunnels where they may lay more eggs, or move onto some other person who may be in close contact. Many mites are rubbed off or washed off, or are dug out of their tunnels by scratching, and are killed.

How does Scabies present? Scabies causes intense itching, especially over bold folds like the armpits, breasts, waistline and genital area. The itch may be more pronounced at night time. Small pink papules resembling insect bites may be seen.

Scabies is often caused by close contact with another person with scabies. Hospitalized persons or those in nursing homes may be particularly prone. It may also occur from sharing bedding with someone with scabies. Thus, household contacts may all share scabies and scabies can be contracted from hotel bedding from recent travel.

How is Scabies treated? Scabies is easily treated with a topical prescription cream. If you will follow these directions carefully, you should be cured quickly. After two applications, very nearly 100% of people are cured. Some itching may persist for a few weeks after treatment, but this comes from the drying effect of the treatment, or simply persistent irritation from previous infestation. Occasionally a person might be re-exposed to scabies, and get an entirely new attack.

Directions for Scabies Treatment:

1. Apply your prescribed medication to the entire skin surface, from the chin to toes, and into skin folds using the medication liberally so that there is not a single place for the mite or egg to hide and remain untreated. Under fingernails and the umbilical ("bellybutton") area are critical areas not to overlook. **COVER EVERYTHING FROM THE NECK DOWN.**
2. Leave the medication on for 8-12 hours or overnight. Remember not to wash your hands during the treatment period, or you will wash off the medication.
3. Once you have finished the treatment period, take the sheets and pillowcases off the bed for washing **before** you shower. You will also need to wash any clothes you have worn over the past 48 hours, or set them aside for at least that period of time. The wash cycle should be with hot water. **It is not necessary to scrub or fumigate the house or furniture.**
4. Once the washing has been done or set up such that you don't have to handle any worn clothes or bedding, you may take a bath or shower.

5. Apply moisturizing cream liberally to counteract the drying effect of the bathing and medications.
6. Put on clean clothes and put clean sheets and pillowcases on the bed.
7. After seven days, repeat all of the above directions.

Scabies is very contagious! All members of the household and any sexual partners should be treated at the same time.

Do not use this product after the two treatments recommended above. Remember, the itching can persist for 3-4 weeks after treatment; however, there should be a general trend towards decreased itching with time. If after 4-6 weeks you still have persistent itching, please contact your provider.