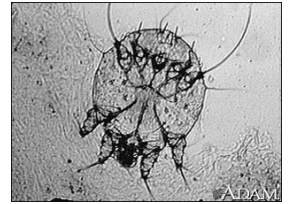


Scabies

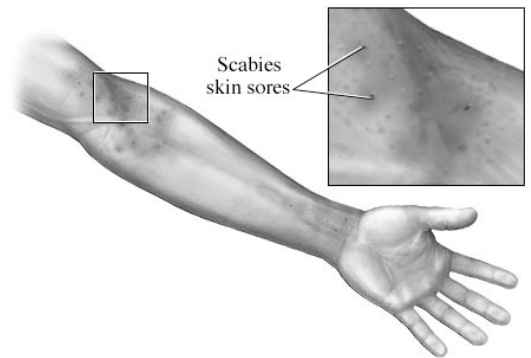
Scabies is a highly contagious skin infection that is caused by an infestation of a parasite (*Sarcoptes scabiei*). This mite burrows under the skin and causes intense itching. Dermatologists estimate that more than 300 million cases of scabies occur worldwide each year. Scabies can infect anyone regardless of age, race or personal hygiene.



The earliest and most common symptom of scabies is itching, especially at night. This itching is caused by an allergic reaction to the toxins the female mite releases as she lays eggs in the burrows under the skin. The adult mites live closer to the skin surface and can be scratched off the skin. If this happens, they can live in bedding or clothing for up to 24 hours or more.

Other common symptoms of Scabies are:

- Blisters or pustules on the palm and soles of the feet
- S-shaped tracks in the skin with insect like bite marks
- Areas commonly infected include:
 - Fingers and web spaces between fingers
 - Wrists
 - Elbows
 - Armpits
 - Buttocks
 - Knees
 - feet



Scabies prefers warmer sites on the skin such as skin folds or where clothing is tight. It can also be found under the nails as a result of the itching. Mites also tend to hide in or on bracelets and watchbands or in the skin under rings.

A secondary bacterial infection may occur because of the scratching. This may cause localized swelling, redness and fever.

In individuals never before exposed to scabies, the onset of clinical signs and symptoms is 4-6 weeks after infestation. Some people may not realize that they have it for years; in previously exposed individuals, onset can be as soon as 2-4 days after infestation.

Healthcare Practitioners can diagnose scabies by looking at the rash and finding the burrows. Scraping from a suspected burrow can be examined under a microscope to detect a mite or ova. This test is not conclusive however, and most healthcare practitioners rely on a detailed history and physical exam to diagnose scabies.

Scabies is treated with topical medications:

- 5% Permethrin cream - applied to the skin from the neck down at bedtime and washed off in the morning. A second treatment one week later may be needed, but not before because the cream may irritate the skin.
- 1% lindame lotion - applied to the skin from the neck down at night and wash off in the morning. It may be reapplied one week later, but not before because the lotion may irritate the skin.

Other treatment instructions:

- Everyone in the family should be treated.
- Bedding and clothing must be washed or dry cleaned.
 - Use the hottest water possible
 - Any clean clothes in drawers or closets are ok - mites are attracted to scent.
 - If you can't wash an item - place it in a dryer on the hot cycle for 30 minutes or press with a hot iron.
- Carpets or upholstery hold be vacuumed and discard the bag.
- Pets do not need to be treated.
- Items may also be placed in a sealed plastic bag for 2 weeks.

Web links for more information:

- Web MD: <http://www.webmd.com/genital-herpes/default.htm>Family Doctor.org: <http://www.webmd.com/skin-problems-and-treatments/tc/scabies-topic-overview>
- Mayo Clinic: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/scabies/DS00451>
- Family Doctor.org: http://kidshealth.org/PageManager.jsp?dn=familydoctor&lic=44&article_set=22947
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <http://www.cdc.gov/scabies/>
- National Institutes of Health: <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/scabies.html>

If you are a registered Millersville University student and you have questions or you need to make an appointment, please call Millersville University Health Services at 872-3250.



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