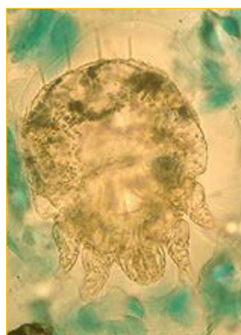


Exposure to scabies mites can cause skin irritation, scratching, and discomfort. Transfer between people can occur via close physical contact with infested persons or less commonly with infested bedding, clothing, and towels. It is most often spread among family members or through sexual contact.

Scabies is generally not spread through casual contact. Topical medications and good hygiene are very effective remedies to remove these parasites.

WHAT IS SCABIES?

Scabies is a skin condition caused by the human itch mite (*Sarcoptes scabiei* var. *hominis*). It is contagious and can spread quickly in areas where people are in close physical contact (skin-to-skin). The condition is sometimes spread indirectly by sharing infested items such as clothing, towels, or bedding. Indirect spread can occur more easily when a person has crusted scabies.



Scabies mite
Source: CDC

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF SCABIES?

Common symptoms are intense itching and a pimple-like skin rash. The rash can either affect the entire body or is limited to places such as armpits, buttocks, elbows, genitals, between the fingers, nipples, shoulder blades, waist, and wrists. Symptoms can also affect the head, face, neck, the palms and soles, and are found most commonly in infants and young children.



Following the first exposure and infestation with scabies mites, it may take 2-6 weeks for symptoms to appear. Repeated exposure and infestation leads to earlier onset of symptoms (1 - 4 days after exposure).

IS THERE A TREATMENT FOR SCABIES?

Yes. Scabies is treated with prescribed topical creams to kill off the mites. Treatment also is recommended for people who have been in close contact with infested persons.



WHAT YOU CAN DO

- **Avoid direct contact with infested persons.** Skin-to-skin contact is a transmission point for these agents.
- **Avoid contact with items (e.g., bedding, clothes) used by an infested person.** Ensure that all bedding, clothing, and towels are thoroughly decontaminated.
- **Apply topical medications as necessary.** Use of topical medications will destroy mites and the eggs they lay.

It is highly recommended to decontaminate bedding, clothing, and towels used by infested persons and people they are in close contact with. Additionally, thoroughly clean and vacuum all rooms.

HOW CAN I PREVENT SCABIES?

Avoid skin-to-skin contact and contact with items such as clothing or bedding used by a person infested with scabies mites.

Transmission of scabies mites will continue until infested persons are successfully treated i.e., mites and eggs are destroyed.

Scabies

Scabies is a skin condition caused by mites. It causes intense itching and a pimple-like skin rash that may affect various areas of the body. Scabies is contagious and can spread quickly in areas where people are in close physical contact.

How can I get scabies?

Scabies usually is spread by skin-to-skin contact with a person who has scabies.

- Scabies sometimes is spread indirectly by sharing items such as clothing, towels, or bedding used by an infested person.
- Scabies can spread easily under crowded conditions where close body and skin contact is common.

How can I prevent getting scabies?

Prevent scabies by avoiding skin-to-skin contact with a person who has scabies and contact with items such as clothing or bedding used by a person infested with scabies mites.

Infested objects can cause more easily when a person has crusted scabies.

What are the symptoms of scabies?

Common symptoms of itching and a pimple-like skin rash may affect much of the body or be limited to common places such as:

- Between the fingers
- Wrist
- Elbow
- Armpit
- Genitals
- Nipple
- Waist
- Buttocks
- Shoulder blades

Symptoms affect the head, face, neck, palms and soles in infants and young children, but usually not adults and older children.

When a person is first infested with scabies mites, it usually takes 2-6 weeks for symptoms to appear after being infested. If a person has had scabies before, symptoms appear 1-4 days after exposure.

How can scabies be treated?

Scabies should be treated with topical creams that can kill the mites, which are available by prescription from your health care provider in addition to the affected person. Treatment also is recommended for people they have been in contact with.

Laundry (clothing and towels used by infested persons) and objects they use in close contact with should be decontaminated. To decontaminate:

- Wash them in hot water and dry in a hot dryer or in sunlight.
- Discard items that can't be washed in a sealed plastic bag for at least 72 hours.
- Thoroughly clean and vacuum rooms.

For more information about scabies, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/scabies/>

REFERENCES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): Parasites - Scabies
[CDC: Scabies Fact Sheet](#)

