Scabies

What is it?

Scabies is a very itchy skin rash. It is caused by tiny creatures called mites that can only be seen with a microscope. Scabies mites dig under the skin, usually on the hands and feet. You can sometimes see little bumps or squiggly lines called burrows where the scabies mites have been. Sometimes the scabies rash can get infected with bacteria, causing pain, redness, pus and scabs. Scabies mites can spread to other people through skin-to-skin contact.





How can we treat it?

Scabies must be treated, otherwise it will not go away. Treatment is with a cream and/or tablet. Everyone in the same house needs to be treated to stop it coming back, even if they don't have the rash themselves.

To treat scabies using a cream:

STEP 1: Rub the cream over your entire body from head to toe (but not on the eyes, lips and mouth). Do this at night time so it can stay on all night while you sleep. Make sure you put the cream between the fingers and toes, under the feet, under the nails, behind the ears and in the armpits and around the bottom. If you wash your hands, make sure you put the cream on your hands again.

STEP 2: In the morning, wash the cream off by taking a shower.

STEP 3: Repeat Steps 1-2 again in .....

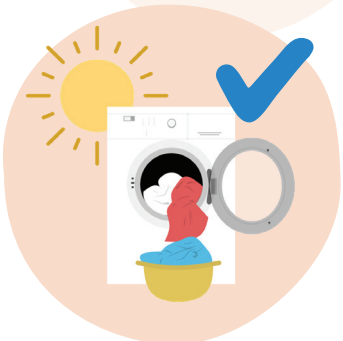
To treat scabies using a tablet: .....

To clear scabies from your house:

- ✔ Wash all clothes, towels and sheets with hot water and dry them in the sun.
- ✔ Seal non-washable items (like soft toys) in a plastic bag for least 3 days.
- ✔ Carpeted floors and fabric furniture should be vacuumed.



To treat the itchy rash: Use a steroid ointment on the itchy rash twice each day until the skin is smooth and the itch has gone. This may take up to 4 weeks.



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To treat the secondary bacterial infection:

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How can we stop it from spreading?

- ✘ Avoid sharing clothes or towels – especially if someone has an itchy rash.
- ✔ Stay home from school, day care or work until after the first treatment.
- ✔ Get your skin checked if it is itchy, and bring other family members to get checked too.

Your skin care plan:

Want more information?

dermnetnz.org

dermcoll.edu.au/a-to-z-of-skin

This factsheet was developed as part of the Koolungar Moorditj Healthy Skin Project.