

Scabies Control and Prevention

Last Updated 2018

Basics of Infection Prevention
Healthcare-Associated Infections Program
Center for Health Care Quality
California Department of Public Health



Objectives

- Identify signs and symptoms of typical and crusted scabies
- Discuss scabies detection
- Describe elements of a scabies control plan
- Review scabies prevention

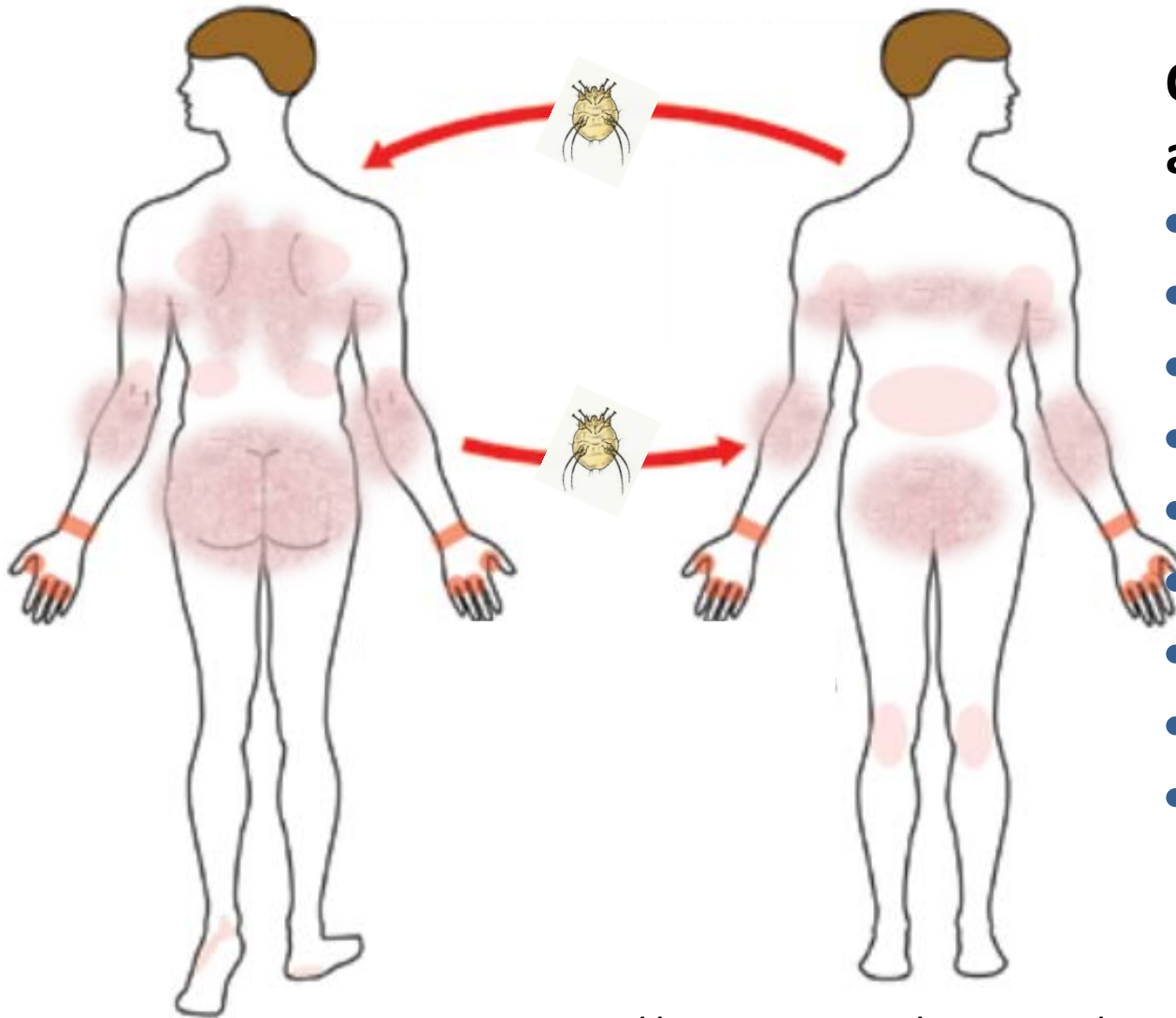
What is Scabies?

- Mites burrow under the skin and lay eggs
- Severe itching due to allergic reaction
- Infestation causes non-specific bumps with short, wavy, elevated lines or burrows
- Rash can mimic other infections (such as ringworm, insect bites, contact dermatitis, psoriasis, impetigo, eczema, etc.)
- Typical scabies not usually transmitted via inanimate objects



CDPH Scabies Fact Sheet, 2008

Scabies Transmission



Commonly affected areas

- Between fingers
- Armpit
- Wrist
- Elbow
- Waist
- Penis
- Nipple
- Buttocks
- Shoulder blades

Typical Scabies

- Affects people with normal immunity
- Mildly contagious
- Takes 15 – 50 skin mites to cause infection
- Usually presents in the finger webs
- More likely to cause infection in LTC or residential care
- No signs/symptoms for 4-6 weeks after infestation
 - If previously infested, symptoms occur in 48 hours with reinfestation

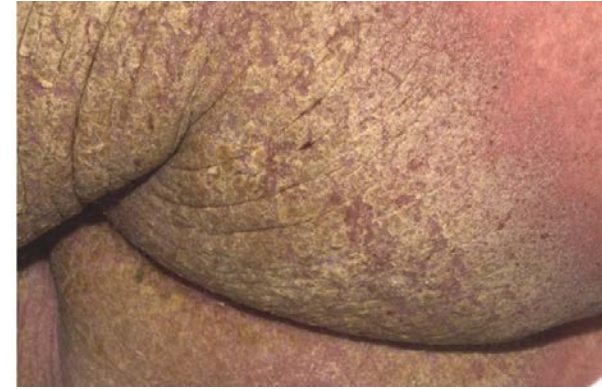


CDC

CDPH Scabies Fact Sheet, 2008

Atypical “Crusted” Scabies

- Formerly Norwegian scabies
- Extremely contagious
- Thick, crusted lesions
- Infested with millions of mites
- Occurs with immune suppression (such as steroid treatment, chemotherapy, psoriasis)
- Often misdiagnosed



Crusted scabies. © Dr Roderick Hay
World Health Organization



Web.stanford.edu

[cdc.gov/parasites/scabies/health_professionals/crusted.html](https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/scabies/health_professionals/crusted.html)

Scabies Detection

- Prevent outbreaks through early identification
- **Educate healthcare workers on recognition of scabies**
- Test for scabies promptly
 - Skin scraping is the standard test
 - Done by physician, or trained healthcare provider

CDPH Management of Scabies Outbreaks in California Health Care Facilities, 2008

Scabies Treatment

- Treatment options
 - Permethrin cream 5%
 - Sulfur ointment
 - Ivermectin – oral
 - Lindane and Crotamiton lotions (not for children)
- Leave treatment on for recommended time
- Treat all close personal contacts
 - Treat at same time to prevent reinfection
- Refer to CDC and CDPH Guidance

[cdc.gov/parasites/scabies/treatment.html](https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/scabies/treatment.html)

Cleaning Resident or Family Belongings

- Clean bedding and clothing worn or used next to the skin during the 3 days before treatment
 - Machine wash and dry using the **hot water and hot dryer cycles or use dry-cleaner**
 - Place items unable to be cleaned or laundered in a **closed plastic bag for several days to a week**
- Scabies mites generally do not survive more than 2 to 3 days away from human skin.

[cdc.gov/parasites/scabies/prevent.html](https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/scabies/prevent.html)

Scabies Control Plan

- Develop scabies outbreak control plan
- Train staff to recognize and report scabies signs and symptoms
- Pre-determine scabies outbreak threshold
 - Two cases of typical scabies in a 2 week period
 - One case of crusted scabies
- Report outbreak to L&C and local public health
- Treat symptomatic cases and contacts

CDPH Management of Scabies Outbreaks in California Health Care Facilities, 2008

Scabies Prevention Plan - 1

- Assess skin, hair and nail beds of all new admissions as soon as possible following arrival
- Document pruritus, rashes and skin lesions
 - Notify nursing supervisor and the attending physician
- Repeat skin assessment at least every 4 weeks

Scabies Prevention Plan - 2

- Immediately search for additional cases when scabies suspected
- Initiate Contact Precautions until the diagnosis confirmed and appropriately treated or ruled out
- Educate HCP on the epidemiology of scabies and how to identify and report any unusual pruritus, rashes or skin lesions
- Instruct HCP, visitors, and volunteers to report any exposure to scabies in the home or the community

Summary

- Educate staff on early identification and treatment of scabies
- Break transmission cycle
- Presumptively isolate potential cases
- Know facility scabies policy:
 - Scabies detection
 - Scabies outbreak control plan
 - Scabies prevention

Resources

- CDPH, Outbreak Management of Scabiew Outbreaks in California Health Care Facilities, March 2008
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/MgmntofScabiesOutbreaksinHCFacilities.pdf>
- CDC, Parasites, scabies
[cdc.gov/parasites/scabies/prevent.html](https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/scabies/prevent.html)