

Important Information about SCABIES

What is scabies?

- Scabies is a skin condition caused by an infestation of tiny mites that can spread from person to person.
- Scabies infestations happen when mites crawl under a person's skin and lay eggs.
- Anyone can get scabies, even if they've had it before.

How do people get scabies?

- Scabies mites are spread by direct, long-lasting contact with the skin of a person who has scabies – a quick handshake or hug will not usually spread scabies.
- Scabies is often spread to sexual partners or household members who have direct skin-to-skin contact.
- Scabies can also spread by sharing clothes or bedding with someone who has scabies, but this is not as common.
- Scabies can spread quickly in crowded areas where people are close together for long periods of time and where skin contact is frequent. Scabies is common in day care centers, long-term care facilities, nursing homes, and prisons.
- You cannot get scabies from animals.

What are the signs and symptoms of scabies?

- The most common symptoms of scabies include:
 - Severe itching on most of the body, especially at night
 - Red bumps or a bumpy rash on the skin, usually between the fingers or on the wrists, elbows, armpits, genital areas, waist, or shoulder blades
 - Mite burrows on the skin that look like a zigzag or "S" pattern
 - Sores or infections caused by scratching the rash
- When a person gets scabies for the first time, it usually takes 2 to 6 weeks for symptoms to start. If a person has had scabies before, symptoms can appear 1 to 4 days after being infested with scabies mites again.
- A person that is infested with scabies mites can spread scabies even if they do not have symptoms.

How can I help prevent scabies?

- You can help prevent scabies by avoiding direct skin-to-skin contact with someone who has scabies, or by avoiding contact with the clothes or bedding (like sheets and blankets) used by someone who has scabies.

How can I get rid of scabies?

- See a doctor if you think you or a family member has scabies.
- A doctor will give you medicine to treat scabies. Use the medicine from the doctor as directed. The most common treatment for scabies is 5% permethrin

cream applied directly to the skin.

- Wash infested clothes and bed sheets in very hot water and dry them in a dryer on the hot cycle for at least 20 minutes to kill the mites.
- For items that can't be washed, place them in a sealed bag for 1 week to kill any remaining mites. Scabies mites do not survive more than a few days away from a person's body.
- Vacuum furniture and carpets to get rid of mites on those items. Throw the vacuum bag away after you vacuum.

What else should I do?

- Tell your sexual partners and household members if you have scabies so they can be checked too. Scabies treatment is usually recommended for members of the same household, especially for those who have frequent or long-lasting skin-to-skin contact with someone who has scabies.
- If you are being treated for scabies, do not have close or sexual contact with someone until you finish the treatment.
- Do not have direct contact with partners or household members that have scabies because you could get scabies again. Tell them to get treated.

Where can I get more information about scabies?

- Visit the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) scabies website](https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/scabies/index.html) (<https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/scabies/index.html>).

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