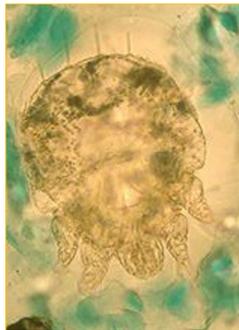


Exposure to scabies mites can cause skin irritation, scratching, and discomfort. Transfer between people can occur via close physical contact with infested persons or less commonly with infested bedding, clothing, and towels. It is most often spread among family members or through sexual contact.

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.



REFERENCES

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\): Parasites - Scabies](https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/Scabies)
[CDC: Scabies Fact Sheet](#)