

SCABIES



Fact Sheet

Scabies is an infestation of the skin by the human itch mite (*Sarcoptes scabiei*). The microscopic mite lives, burrows and lays its eggs in the upper layer of the skin. It is spread by direct, prolonged, skin-to-skin contact with a person who has scabies. Typically, only about 10-15 mites are present on an infested person, and these mites can live for as long as 1-2 months on their host. They will survive no more than 48-72 hours off a person.

SYMPTOMS:

- Intense itching (especially at night)
- “Red bump” rash

Sometimes, burrow tunnels can be seen as faint lines between the bumps. *Usual* sites for the rash include the wrist, between fingers, inside elbow, and waistline. The rash can be anywhere, but adults and older children usually do *not* see it above the neck or on palms and soles. However, these sites are often involved in infants and young children.

See your health care provider for treatment and for symptoms that are severe or do not get better.

If you would like to learn more about this, and other communicable diseases, go to <http://www.cdc.gov>.

This fact sheet was created by the Health Services Department of Beaverton School District and has been approved by the Washington County Health Department, Disease Control and Prevention Program.

HOW TO PREVENT

GETTING AND SPREADING SCABIES:

- Avoid skin-to-skin contact with those who are known to have scabies.
- Avoid crowded conditions where close body and skin contact is frequent.
- Scabies is spread easily to sexual partners and household members.
- On rare occasion, the mite is spread indirectly by sharing articles of clothing, towels or bedding with an infested person.

Scabies can be treated

- Your doctor will prescribe a scabicide lotion to kill the mites and the eggs – carefully follow the directions for application.
- It is recommended that all members of a household be treated at the same time.
- Bedding, clothing and towels used by infected persons anytime during the three days before treatment should be decontaminated by washing in hot water and drying in a hot dryer, by dry-cleaning, or by sealing in a plastic bag for at least 72 hours.



Anyone can be infested with scabies, which is also known as the seven-year-itch. In fact, the rash and itching can last for several weeks after treatment. If after treatment new burrows or rash appear, or itching continues more than two weeks, seek the advice of a physician.