



Scabies

Should there be a case of Scabies in your child's classroom, your child may be exposed. We are bringing this to your attention because Scabies can spread rapidly within a school unless all affected children are treated quickly.

What is Scabies?

Scabies is an infestation of the skin with a tiny mite smaller than a pinhead, *Sarcoptes Scabiei*. The mites burrow anywhere in the skin, mostly on hands, and cannot be seen. The rash is caused by the body's reaction to the mite and the scratching that occurs.

How could my child get Scabies?

Anyone can get Scabies. The mite passes from person to person through skin contact. Scabies is unlikely to be caught by short contact such as shaking hands. Longer contact is needed but could be as little as 5 to 10 minutes. Children playing together are especially likely to pass it from one to the other. The itching may occur anytime from two to eight weeks after catching the mites, so mites can pass to someone else before the rash appears.

How will I know if my child has Scabies?

If your child develops an itchy rash bring the child to your doctor. The doctor may be able to tell just by looking at the rash if it is Scabies or may examine some skin scales under the microscope to make the diagnosis.

What should I do if my child has Scabies?

A variety of special lotions and creams that kill mites are available at the pharmacy. It is best to see your doctor first to be sure that it is Scabies. It is important to follow the instructions that come with the lotion carefully, as there are a number of different preparations available. As spread within households is common, it is a good idea to treat all family members at the same time even if there are no symptoms.

All clothing and bedding which has been used by the infected person in the 3 days before treatment should be washed in the HOT cycle of the washing machine. Items which cannot be easily washed, like pillows or stuffed toys, should be stored in tightly closed plastic bags for four days before using again. The mite cannot survive off the body for more than four days so the pillows or stuffed toys will be free of mites when taken out after 4 days

Thank you for giving this your attention. Your doctor or chemist will be able to answer any further question that you might have concerning Scabies and the preparations available to treat it