



X-Plain Scabies

Reference Summary

Introduction

Scabies is a common condition caused by the infestation of a very small mite. Scabies is a condition that can be treated easily. This reference summary will describe scabies and its treatment options.

Scabies

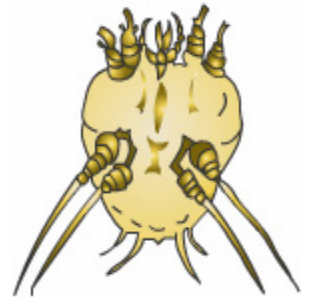
Scabies is the infestation of the microscopic mite, called *Sarcoptes scabiei*, in the skin. Scabies is common all over the world and affects people of all races and social classes.

Scabies spreads very fast in crowded conditions where there is frequent skin-to-skin contact between people, such as in hospitals, institutions, child-care facilities, and nursing homes.

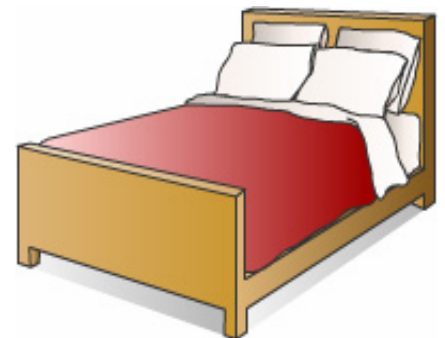
Scabies is transmitted by direct, prolonged, skin-to-skin contact with a person infested with scabies mites. A quick handshake or hug will usually not spread scabies.

Scabies mites spread easily between sexual partners and household members. Sharing clothing, towels, and bedding can also transmit scabies mites.

People with weak immune systems and the elderly are at risk for a more severe form of scabies, called *Norwegian scabies* or *crusted scabies*. Away from the human body, mites do not survive longer than 48-72 hours. While living on a person, however, an adult female mite can live up to a month.



Scabies Mite



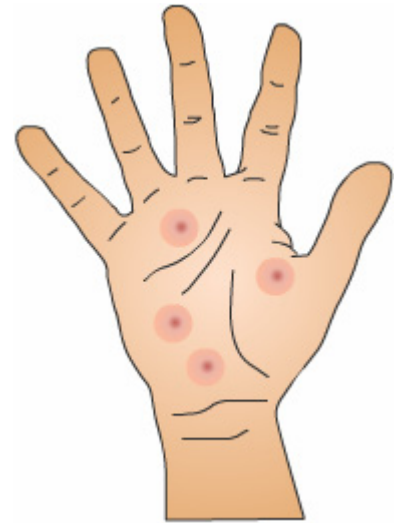
This document is a summary of what appears on screen in X-Plain™. It is for informational purposes and is not intended to be a substitute for the advice of a doctor or healthcare professional or a recommendation for any particular treatment plan. Like any printed material, it may become out of date over time. It is important that you rely on the advice of a doctor or a healthcare professional for your specific condition.

Symptoms

At first, scabies can usually be seen in the hands. Scabies mites burrow small tunnels in the skin causing elevated tracks and rashes.

Scabies also leads to pimple-like irritations or rashes of the skin in places such as:

- the webbing between the fingers
- the skin folds on the wrist, elbow, or knee
- the penis
- the breast
- the shoulder blades



Intense itching, especially at night, can occur over most of the body. Scratching may cause sores. Bacteria can infect these sores. In the case of a person who has never been infested with scabies, symptoms may take 4-6 weeks to appear.

For a person who has had scabies in the past, symptoms appear within several days. A person does not become immune due to previous infestation.

Diagnosis

Examination of the burrows or rashes usually leads to diagnosis of scabies. A skin scraping may be used to look for mites, mite eggs, or mite waste to confirm the diagnosis. Even though a skin scraping, or biopsy, comes back negative, the patient still may be infested.

Typically, there are less than 10 mites on the entire body of an infested person. This makes it easy to overlook an infestation.

Treatment

Anyone who is diagnosed with scabies, as well as his or her sexual partner and anyone in close contact with the patient, should receive treatment. If your health care provider has instructed family members to be treated, everyone should receive treatment at the same time to prevent re-infestation.

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Several lotions to treat scabies are available. Always follow the directions provided by your doctor or the directions on the package insert. Apply lotion to a clean body all the way from the neck to the toes. Leave the lotion on overnight for at least 8 hours. After 8 hours, take a bath or shower to wash off the lotion. Dress in clean clothes.

All clothes, bedding, and towels used by an infested person 2 days before treatment should be washed in hot water and dried in a hot dryer. A 2nd treatment with the lotion may be necessary 7-10 days later. Pregnant women and children may be treated with milder scabies medications.

Itching may continue for 2-3 weeks and does not mean that a person is still infested. Your health care provider may prescribe additional medication to relieve severe itching. No new rashes should appear 24-48 hours after treatment.



Scabies & Pets

Pets can be infested with a different kind of scabies mite. Scabies on pets is called *mange*. If your pet has mange and is in close contact with you, the mites could get under your skin and cause itching and skin irritation. Pet mites are different from human scabies mites; they die in only a couple days and do not reproduce. Pet mites may cause you to itch for several days, but you do not need treatment with special medication to kill them.

Even though pet scabies mites die in a couple days if they are on you, they will continue to live on your pet until treated. It is best to treat your pet as soon as possible, so the mites do not keep infesting you.

Summary

Scabies is the infestation of a microscopic mite into the skin. Scabies treatment is available for the patient as well as close relatives, household members, and sexual partners. Following your doctor's instructions will help cure the disease and prevent re-infestations.



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