



One minute guide to...

SCABIES:

What is it?

Scabies is caused by scabies mites — tiny, insect-like parasites that burrow into your skin and infect the top layer by laying their eggs. Scabies causes a rash, irritation, and intense itching especially at night. It is very easily spread by skin-to-skin close contact so needs treatment otherwise it can last indefinitely. Scabies is not caused by poor hygiene.

What does it look like?

The symptoms of scabies are:

- Intense itching especially at night
- A raised rash or spots that may look red or can feel bumpy.
- Rash usually spreads all over body but only as far as the head and neck on older people, children, and those with weakened immune systems.
- The rash usually starts on the hands and can be seen between the fingers, this rash then develops into tiny (usually red) spots.
- The rash may leave dark spots on the skin and on darker skin this may look brown or black.

Photos of rash/spots, and information can be found at: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/scabies/>

What to do?

Pharmacists will be able to provide you with the correct lotions or cream to treat the Scabies which need to be repeated one week later. The pharmacist will need to know if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

Everyone in the household will need to be treated at the same time as it can take 8 weeks for the rash to appear and so contact and infection may have occurred without you all knowing.

Also:

- Do not share bedding or clothes with anyone who has Scabies.
- wash all bedding and clothing in the house at 50C or higher on the first day of treatment.
- put clothing that cannot be washed in a sealed bag for 3 days until the mites die.
- stop babies and children sucking treatment from their hands by putting socks or mittens on them.

How long does it take to get rid of Scabies:

You or your child can return to work or educational setting 24 hours after first treatment as the treatment kills the mites very quickly. The itching may continue for a few weeks but usually if it continues for more than 4 weeks visit your GP for further guidance or treatment. As it can make psoriasis or eczema worse it may be necessary to see your GP before then.

Contact UKHSA at: cl.hpt@ukhsa.gov.uk or phone 0344 2250562 (option 2) if there are 2 or more cases of scabies within your setting.

Further Information:

NHS advice: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/scabies/>

British skin foundation: <https://knowyourskin.britishskinfoundation.org.uk/condition/scabies/>



Working for Cumberland Council and
Westmorland & Furness Council