

Scabies

Infection Control Team Patient Information Leaflet

What is scabies?

It is a skin infection caused by a mite that burrows under the skin. The mite is extremely small and can sometimes be seen with the naked eye and the aid of a torch. It can be uncomfortable but it is not a serious disease.

What are the symptoms?

The main symptom is itching which is worse at night. There can be a rash on the wrists, between the fingers and toes (the webs), between the thighs and on the trunk – especially around the waist.

Is it infectious?

Yes. It is spread by skin-to-skin contact. You only need to be in contact with someone for five minutes to catch it. The scabies mite does not survive for long outside the human body so you cannot catch it from bedclothes. It cannot jump from person to person.

What is the incubation period?

Symptoms may start from several days to six weeks after contact with an infected person.

Is there any treatment?

Yes. You can buy a lotion from the chemist or get some on prescription from your GP. You will need to follow the instructions that come with it.

You should apply this lotion thoroughly to all body surfaces including between the buttocks, on the genitals and under your nails, between toes and fingers and behind your ears. The treatment should not be applied after a hot bath as if your body is hot, the lotion will be absorbed quickly and will not stay on the area where the scabies burrows are.

If the lotion is washed off for any reason, it should be re-applied immediately.

Are there any problems with the treatment?

The treatment is safe but anyone who has eczema, epilepsy or who is pregnant should consult their GP before using it.

Who should be treated?

All family members should be treated at the same time, even if only one person has symptoms. In residential or nursing homes, all contacts should be treated.

Should I stay off work or school?

Yes but you can return to work or school the day after the first treatment has been completed.

If you have any questions, or if there is anything you do not understand about this leaflet, please contact:

Infection Control Team on 01384 244174 (8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)

Russells Hall Hospital switchboard number: 01384 456111

This leaflet can be downloaded or printed from:

<http://dudleygroup.nhs.uk/about-us/quality/infection-control/patient-information-leaflets/>

If you have any feedback on this patient information leaflet, please email dgft.patient.information@nhs.net

This leaflet can be made available in large print, audio version and in other languages, please call 0800 073 0510.

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Ulotka dostępna jest również w dużym druku, wersji audio lub w innym języku. W tym celu zadzwoń pod numer 0800 073 0510.

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Aceasta broșura poate fi pusă la dispoziție tipărită cu caractere mari, versiune audio sau în alte limbi, pentru acest lucru vă rugăm sunați la 0800 073 0510.

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