

## SCABIES FACT SHEET

### Definition:

Scabies is a parasitic infestation of the skin caused by a burrowing mite called *Sarcoptes scabiei*.

Norwegian scabies is a highly infectious form of scabies characterized by crusting with hundreds of thousands of mites present under the skin.

### What are the signs and symptoms of scabies?

The signs and symptoms of scabies include itching, often and usually worse at night. Tiny blisters or bumps in thread like line are present on the skin. These are prominent on skin folds often in the following areas: between fingers, armpits, around waist, along side of wrist, back of elbows, buttocks, head, neck, knees, shoulder blade, and the genital area in males. The head, neck, palms and soles may be involved in infants.

With Norwegian scabies, severe itching may be reduced or absent.

### How is scabies spread?

Transmission of parasites commonly occurs through close contact or direct contact with infected skin and contaminated undergarments and bedding.

### Infection Control

- Isolate patient until 24 hours of effective treatment with scabicide.
- Observe strict contact precautions. Use appropriate barriers such as gowns and gloves when providing direct patient care.
- All personal clothing and bedding used 4 days prior to effective treatment must be laundered at hot cycles of water and in the dryer.
- Investigate contacts for prophylaxis treatment. All those who have close contact with the patients with scabies before treatment and until 24 hours of effective treatment must be examined and given prophylaxis. In case of exposure to Norwegian scabies, all those who have direct and indirect contact with patient before treatment and until 24 hours of effective treatment must be given prophylaxis as soon as possible.

### Information Sources:

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