

Scabies



Scabies is a skin infection caused by a mite. It can be uncomfortable but is not a serious disease.

What are the symptoms?

The appearance of the rash varies but tiny pimples and nodules are characteristic. Secondary infection can occur if the rash has been scratched. The scabies mites are attracted to folded skin such as the webs of the fingers. Burrows may also be seen on the wrists, palms, elbows, genitalia and buttocks. Itching is the main symptoms, particularly when warm or at night.

How is it transmitted?

It is transmitted by skin to skin contact in a warm environment e.g. by children holding hands. The scabies mite does not survive for long outside the human body and cannot be picked up just from clothes.

How can spread be prevented?

Scabies is infectious so infected individuals should be excluded until after their first treatment has been completed. Affected individuals do need to seek medical review to as treatment is required. Lotions can be purchased from a chemist or obtained on prescription from the doctor.

- The whole family should be treated at the same time even if only one person has obvious scabies.
- If more than one child in a class has scabies and it appears that transmission may be taking place at school, then the health protection team should be notified as classmates may also require treatment.

More information on scabies can be found in chapter nine of the [Health protection in schools and childcare facilities](#) guidance.