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Scabies

What is scabies? Scabies is a highly contagious, but curable, skin disease that affects nearly one third of a billion people worldwide. It's caused by a tiny mite, just barely visible to the naked eye, that spends nearly its entire life in, or on, the human skin. Although more common in warmer climates, scabies can occur anywhere, and on anyone within all social and income levels. It affects men, women, and children of all ages.

How is scabies transmitted? Scabies are transmitted from person-to-person through close physical contact, such as between family members, sexual partners, or children playing at school. An unproven, but possible, method of transmission is via infested clothing, bedding, and towels. Should everyone in my house be treated as well? To avoid re-infestation, your provider may recommend that all affected household members be treated at the same time, within the same 24 hour period.

Should I also disinfect bedding and clothing? Although scabies mites cannot live long without a human host, there have been a few cases of apparent transmission through infested clothing and bedding. Even so, heroic cleaning efforts are generally unnecessary. Normal, hot water laundering of towels, linens, and all clothes used within the previous 48 hours is typically sufficient to prevent re-infestation.

Your Provider has prescribed safe and effective Elimite (permethrin) 5% cream to treat your condition. For best results, please follow these instructions.

- A bath or shower is NOT recommended before applying Elimite cream.
- Thoroughly and gently massage into all skin surfaces, from your neck to the soles of your feet. It's extremely important to apply on every square inch of your body, not just where the rash is.
- Apply between finger and toes creases, in the folds of the wrist and waistline, in the cleft of the buttocks, on the genitals, and in the belly button.
- Keep your nails clipped short, because scabies mites can hide under fingernails.
- Use a tooth pick to apply cream beneath your fingernails and toenails.
- Leave cream on overnight for 8 to 14 hours, and then remove it by bathing and shampooing. You may notice mild itching, burning, or stinging sensation after applying cream. This is usually just a minor, temporary reaction to the medication. Repeat the treatment in one week.
- If you wash your hands or any other area of your body during the treatment period, new cream must be applied immediately.
- It is not unusual for itching and rash to continue for 2 to 4 weeks after treatment. These symptoms may be a temporary reaction to the remains of the mites. This does not mean that the treatment did not work or that it needs to be reapplied.
- For infants or younger children follow the same instructions, except thoroughly massage cream into the neck, scalp, hairline, temples, and forehead where there is little or no hair.