



Scabies

Patient and Family Education

What is scabies?

Scabies is an itchy skin rash caused by a mite that works its way under the skin and lays eggs. This mite is pinpoint in size and usually cannot be seen. The rash and itching caused by the mite occur after the mite has lived in the skin for four to six weeks. Scabies is very contagious (can be passed from one person to another). It may be spread by:

- Coming in contact with a person who has active scabies.
- Sharing clothes or linens that have the scabies mites living in them.

What is the treatment?

Your child's doctor will talk with you about specific care for your child. Some general guidelines to follow include:

- Apply a special lotion ordered by your child's doctor as directed.
- Wash all clothing worn by your child in hot, soapy water. Dry clean anything that cannot be washed.
- Dress your child in clean clothes after treatment with the lotion.
- Change and wash all washable cloth items your child had contact with. This may include things like bed linens, sleeping bags and stuffed animals in hot, soapy water.
- Vacuum all upholstered furniture and carpets in your home and car. Place the vacuum bag in a plastic bag and throw it away.

What medicine will the doctor order?

- Elimite® and Kwell® lotion may be used to kill the mites and their eggs.
 - Elimite – do not use on people allergic to chrysanthemum flowers
 - Kwell – do not use on children less than 12 months of age
- Expect the itching to continue for several days after using the special lotion. The mite parts stay under the skin and cause itching until they are broken down by the body's immune system.

How do I apply these lotions?

Follow your child's doctor's directions closely. General directions include:

- Give your child a warm bath or shower in the evening and shampoo his hair.
 - Dry his skin and allow him to cool off after bathing.
 - Apply lotion from ears and neck down over entire body.
 - Do not spread on face or head unless told by your child's doctor.
 - Be sure to apply lotion in all folds and creases, between fingers and toes, in the armpits and around the genital area (private parts).
- Put your child in clean pajamas.
 - Put cotton socks on your child's hands to keep them from rubbing their eyes and mouth.
- Leave lotion on overnight (eight to 14 hours).
 - Wash lotion off with a shower or bath in the morning.

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room right away.

This is general information and is not specific medical advice for your child. Always consult your child's doctor or other healthcare provider if you have any questions or concerns about the care or health of your child.

Scabies, continued

- Be sure to put more lotion on his hands if they were washed during the eight to 14-hour treatment period.

Can I reapply these lotions?

You may reapply Elimite or Kwell as directed by your child's doctor. The rash may last for up to two weeks after treatment even when all the mites and eggs disappear.

Who should be treated?

- Anyone living in the home who has had contact with the infected child
- All close contacts (whether or not they have the rash) to prevent the infection from coming back

What is the treatment for itching?

Your doctor may advise:

- Cool baths with baking soda or Aveeno[®]
- Over-the-counter hydrocortisone cream can be applied to small areas of the body with the rash
- Sometimes an antihistamine medicine such as Benadryl[®] may be advised to help relieve the itching

When can my child return to school?

Your child can return to school once he has been treated or as advised by his doctor.

When should I call the doctor?

Call your child's doctor if:

- A skin rash or irritation occurs when you use the special lotion
- The scabies rash lasts more than two weeks after treatment

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room right away.

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