

# Scabies

Scabies is a skin condition caused by mites. It commonly leads to intense itching and a pimple-like skin rash that may affect various areas of the body. Scabies is contagious and can spread quickly in areas where people are in close physical contact.

## How can I get scabies?

Scabies usually is spread by skin-to-skin contact with a person who has scabies.

- Scabies sometimes is spread indirectly by sharing items such as clothing, towels, or bedding used by an infested person.
- Scabies can spread easily under crowded conditions where close body and skin contact is common.

## How can I prevent getting scabies?

Prevent scabies by avoiding skin-to-skin contact with a person who has scabies and contact with items such as clothing or bedding used by a person infested with scabies mites.

Indirect spread can occur more easily when a person has crusted scabies.



## What are the symptoms of scabies?

Common symptoms of itching and a pimple-like skin rash may affect much of the body or be limited to common places such as:

- Between the fingers
- Wrist
- Elbow
- Armpit
- Genitals
- Nipple
- Waist
- Buttocks
- Shoulder blades

Symptoms affect the head, face, neck, palms and soles in infants and very young children, but usually not adults and older children.

When a person is first infested with scabies mites, it usually takes 2-6 weeks for symptoms to appear after being infested. If a person has had scabies before, symptoms appear 1-4 days after exposure.

An infested person can transmit scabies, even if they do not have symptoms, until they are successfully treated and the mites and eggs are destroyed.

## How can scabies be treated?

Scabies should be treated with topical creams that can kill the mites, which are available by prescription from your health care provider. In addition to the infested person, treatment also is recommended for people they have been in contact with.

Bedding, clothing, and towels used by infested persons and people they are in close contact with should be decontaminated. To disinfect items,

- Wash them in hot water and dry in a hot dryer or dry-clean.
- Store items that can't be washed in a sealed plastic bag for at least 72 hours.
- Thoroughly clean and vacuum rooms.



For more information about scabies, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/scabies/>