

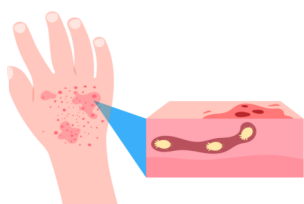
# IPC Bulletin for Care Homes

## Issue No. 49 - February 2024

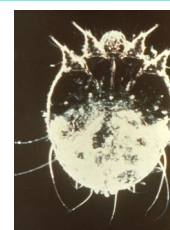


### Scabies

Scabies is an extremely itchy skin disorder that leads to a rash. It is caused by a tiny parasite, *Sarcoptes scabiei*, a mite that burrows into and under the skin. Most of the symptoms are due to the body's immune response to the saliva, eggs and waste produced by the mites. A person can get scabies from close physical contact with someone with scabies for example, by hand holding for a prolonged period of time (approximately 10 minutes). It is difficult to recognise and is often attributed to other skin conditions leading to avoidable transmission.



- Itching is often worse at night.
- There are 2 forms of scabies caused by the same mite: classical (typical) and crusted.
- The mites can live away from a host for up to 4 days, but the role of bedding, clothing and/or towels in transmission is unclear.



| Description              | Classical scabies   | Crusted scabies   |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| Number of mites present? | <20.  | 1,000's or 1,000,000's of mites present in exfoliating scales of skin. It develops as a result of an insufficient immune response.  |
| Who is vulnerable?       | Anyone with direct prolonged skin-to-skin contact (approximately 10 minutes) with someone with scabies.   | People with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A history of immunosuppression</li> <li>• Reduced ability to scratch</li> <li>• Dementia or Down's syndrome</li> </ul> 40% of people with crusted scabies have no identifiable risk factor. |
| Incubation               | 3-6 weeks if a person has never had scabies.<br>1-4 days if a person has previously had scabies.  |   |
| Treatment                | Standard treatment: 2 full body applications of Lyclear Dermal (permethrin 5%) for 8-12 hours, 1 week apart. Reapply to areas washed during treatment period, e.g. hands. Change clothing and bedding after each treatment.<br>If crusted scabies is suspected, dermatological advice should be sought. |   |
| Isolation                | Standard infection control precautions. Avoid skin-to-skin contact until 24 hours following completion of first treatment.  | Standard infection control precautions. Isolate in single room avoid skin-to-skin contact until treatment completed.  |
| PPE                      | Avoid direct skin-to-skin contact. Disposable apron and gloves should be worn for direct contact and handling clothing, bedding, towels and soft furnishings.   |   |
| Treatment of contacts    | Seek advice from your local Community Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) or UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) Team.   |   |
| Environmental cleaning   | Normal cleaning regime.   | Increase frequency of vacuuming and deep clean after each treatment.  |

#### What's new

- Infection Prevention and Control training event for Care Homes and Domiciliary Care: 5<sup>th</sup> March, 2024. A booking form can be downloaded at: [www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk/events/](http://www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk/events/)

Visit our website to find lots of IPC resources, many of which are free to download.

[www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk](http://www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk)

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