

SCABIES:

Although a scabies infestation is unnerving and uncomfortable, treatment is highly effective if carried out thoroughly and properly. Please follow these instructions exactly. If you cannot understand any part of them, please call Dr. Goldwasser for clarification. The prescription will be applied only twice: once, as soon as possible, and once again, one week later. There is no advantage to treating more frequently than this. The prescription cream itself is irritating if it is overused. Please note that infested individuals may not be itchy right away. In fact, it is quite possible to be infested for weeks without symptoms. Therefore, it is essential for each household member to follow these instructions exactly, even if s/he is feeling normal.

As far as contagiousness, the conventional wisdom is that scabies requires rather close bodily contact for transmission. Sexual contact is one well-known method of spread, but even non-sexual contact, such as normal parent-child interaction, can spread the organism. School children will often acquire this mite from normal interaction with friends. Notification of the school nurse, close family contacts, and sexual partners is encouraged. Scabies can otherwise be difficult to diagnose, and can wreak havoc on an individual or on a family before proper treatment can be instituted. There is no reason for embarrassment; Scabies does not occur as a result of poor hygiene. It is an infectious disease just like a “cold” or “sore throat”.

1. Fill your prescription at the pharmacy promptly.
2. One 60-gram tube should cover an average adult a total of two times.
3. The patient and all household members (except pregnant women and infants) ought to be treated simultaneously, regardless of whether the household members are itchy. **If there is a pregnant woman or an infant in the house, please contact Dr. Goldwasser for advice.**
4. As soon as the prescription is filled, treatment should begin as follows:
 - a. Tonight () and in one week from tonight ():

All household members should clip fingernails and toenails back as far as comfortable. At bedtime, apply the cream from the neck down to all household members. Cream should cover all body surfaces including the external genitalia. Scabies has a predilection for body folds—pay special attention to armpits, finger webs, toe webs, and the undersurface of nails. The cream should remain in place for eight to ten hours.
 - b. Tomorrow () and in one week from tomorrow ():

In the morning, strip all the bed sheets. Pajamas and bed sheets must be laundered in hot water, then dried in a hot dryer. Bedclothes such as quilts or comforters that are too large or difficult to launder must be placed in garbage bags for a period of two weeks. Each household member should shower to remove the cream from his/her skin. Upholstered furniture that is frequently used should be thoroughly vacuumed. There is no need for insecticidal sprays. Clothes that were worn during a period of infestation should also be laundered as above or alternatively bagged in plastic for two weeks.
5. Expect the itch to begin to resolve approximately 2 weeks after the first treatment. You can return to work/school after the first treatment.