



KALAMAZOO COUNTY GOVERNMENT

In the Pursuit of Extraordinary Governance...

FACT SHEET

Scabies

(Caused by *Sarcoptes scabiei*, an itch mite)

What is scabies (skay-bees)?	Scabies is a contagious skin disease caused by a tiny itch mite that burrows under the skin to live and reproduce.
How is it spread?	Scabies is spread by close skin-to-skin contact with someone who has scabies, or by sharing infested clothing, bedding, or towels.
What is the incubation period?	It takes about 4-6 weeks after exposure for symptoms to appear, but the mites can spread to others during that time.
What are the early signs?	The most noticeable sign is intense itching, which is worse at night. There are small, red bumps that appear where the mite has been. Sometimes the bumps appear to follow a line and they most often are found in skin folds between the fingers, elbows, wrist, and waistline.
What about contacts?	Anyone can get scabies. Direct contacts of someone with scabies should NOT be excluded from school, unless they have symptoms. Some close contacts may need to be treated if they have had extensive skin to skin contact with the child.
How long is the person contagious?	Until the mites and eggs are destroyed by treatment (no new burrows or bumps appearing during that time).
How is it treated?	Scabies is treated with a lotion prescribed by a doctor. Follow instructions for applying the lotion carefully. Apply the lotion to a clean body from the neck down to the toes and leave on overnight (8 hours). Shower in morning and put on clean clothes. A second treatment may be necessary 7-10 days later (consult healthcare provider). There are milder treatments for pregnant women and small children.
When is it OK to return to daycare/school?	A child may return to school after treatment prescribed by a doctor is completed (usually the next day). Itching may continue for a couple weeks after treatment and is NOT a sign that treatment needs to be repeated.
What else should I know?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pets do not carry human scabies. • It's very important to prevent re-infestation! After treatment, wash clothes worn recently (3 days before treatment), towels, and bedding in hot water and a hot dryer. • Vacuum carpeting and furniture.

This fact sheet is not intended to replace the advice of your physician. Parents should contact their healthcare provider if they have concerns regarding their child's health. If you have general questions, you may contact a Kalamazoo County nurse at 373-5022 or 373-5267.

Rev 7/18

HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

311 E. Alcott St. | Kalamazoo, MI 49001

Phone: 269.373.5200 | www.kalcounty.com/hcs