

Dear Parent:

Your child may have been exposed to scabies at school. Please read the attached sheet “What Parents Need to Know About Scabies” and check your child closely for signs and symptoms over the next 8 weeks.

The control of scabies in our community needs to be a team effort among the families involved, the school, and the Sheboygan County Health and Human Services Department, Division of Public Health. Early identification of scabies and immediate attention is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Principal

Attachment

What Parents Need to Know About Scabies

What is Scabies?

Scabies is a skin disease caused by microscopic mites that burrow under the skin producing pimple-like irritations. Eggs are laid under the skin, the eggs hatch and the cycle repeats itself.

How Are They Spread?

Usually they are spread by direct contact with another person who is infected. The mite does not jump. Exchanging clothing or sharing a bed or towels are also means of spreading. It is **highly contagious**. All socioeconomic levels can be affected without regard to age, sex, race or standards of personal hygiene.

It takes 2-6 weeks from the time of exposure until the symptoms appear. Reinfection is possible with the symptoms starting 1-4 days after exposure. The mite can live up to three days off the human body.

What are the Symptoms of Scabies?

Scabies cause a red, pimple-like itchy rash that is often worse at night. Grayish-white lines (burrows) less than an inch long may be seen in the infected area. The areas of the skin most frequently affected are below the neck in the folds of the skin, finger webs, wrists, elbows, thighs, beltlines, abdomen, breasts, male genitalia, buttocks, armpits, and feet. In infants younger than two years old, the symptoms are likely to appear on the head, neck, hands and feet.

What Should You Do About Scabies?

Promptly see your physician for a definite diagnosis. The treatment for scabies is available only by physician's prescription. **Follow all label or physician directions carefully**. As with any medication, keep out of reach of children. All family/household members and other close physical contacts to the person with scabies should be treated with the medication **at the same time**, even if they have no symptoms. Follow up the next day with a cleansing bath and change bedding and clothing. Itching may persist for one to two weeks.

What Else Should You Do?

- Keep your child home from group setting **until treatment is completed**.
- Wash in hot soapy water all clothing, bedding and towels that household members have used in the last three days and dry in a hot dryer.
- Thoroughly vacuum upholstered furniture, carpeting and mattresses. Avoid use of environmental pesticides.

Scabies spread from person to person and multiple cases or outbreaks should be reported to the Sheboygan County Health and Human Services Department, Division of Public Health. Phone: 459-4382 or 1-800-596-1919, Ext. 4382 for further information.

Ref: Control of Communicable Disease Manual, David Heymann, 2006 Edition; Redbook 2006, American Academy of Pediatrics, Scabies Disease Fact Sheet, Wisconsin Division of Public Health