

## Good to know

- Before the infestation and itching begin, it can take between **4 to 6 weeks**. People can **be contagious** during this period.
- The scabies parasite **does not fly or jump**.
- A person experiencing **symptoms of scabies** as described in this brochure **should consult a doctor**, as the diagnosis can be difficult to establish. A skin test may be necessary.
- If you have been in contact with an affected person, you will need to undergo **identical treatment simultaneously**, and this applies to **all family members**.
- The skin rash and itching from scabies **may persist for several weeks to a month** after effective treatment.



May 2024

### Prevention and Infection Control department

1755 boul. René-Laennec  
Laval, Québec H7M 3L9

Telephone: 450 668-1010,  
extension 23472  
Fax: 450 975-5443  
[www.lavalensante.com](http://www.lavalensante.com)

Centre intégré  
de santé  
et de services sociaux  
de Laval

Québec 

 **DIGNE DE CONFIANCE,**  
à chaque instant

**Information for the user,  
their family and visitors**

## Scabies

Centre intégré  
de santé et de  
services sociaux  
de Laval

May 2024  
62-200-764

Québec 

## What is scabies ?

**Scabies** is a skin infestation caused by a parasite\*. The parasite burrows a small tunnel (furrow) into the superficial part of the skin and lays its eggs there.

\***A parasite** is a type of microorganism, similar to bacteria, viruses, or fungi.

## What are its symptoms ?

- Itching (often more intense at night)
- Red bumps and blisters (lesions with a bubble)
- Furrows (lesions that take the form of wavy lines on the skin surface). Sometimes, a black dot is found at their end.
- Lesions (furrows) all over the body, especially in skin folds.
- Wounds from scratching are often present.

### The most affected areas are:

- Between the fingers and toes
- Wrists
- Folds (elbows or armpits)

## How is it contracted?

A person with scabies is contagious during the incubation period, well before symptoms appear.

The infestation is transmitted through **prolonged direct physical contact**, such as holding hands, sharing the same bed, or having intimate contact with the infected person.

Contact with personal belongings or a surface contaminated by the parasite (e.g., clothing or bedding) carries a lower risk of contagion compared to direct physical contact.

## How to clean clothes and bedding?

- Put the clothes and bedding used during **the four days before treatment, as well as those used 24 hours after starting treatment**, in the washing machine with hot water and dry on a hot cycle for 20 minutes in the dryer.
- Have personal items **that cannot be washed in hot water** dry cleaned, or leave them in a tightly sealed plastic bag **for at least four days**.



Image taken from the brochure « Dermatology CHU Sainte-Justine – Scabies »

## How is it treated?

The treatment involves applying a cream or **lotion containing permethrin**. The doctor or pharmacist may recommend other products.

### Instructions to follow for applying the permethrin-based product:

- Apply the product on dry skin. Allow it to dry before putting on clothes.
- Apply from the hairline (base) downwards, including behind the ears. Also apply in the navel and under the nails of the hands and feet. Nails should be trimmed short and brushed.
- Do not apply the product to mucous membranes (vaginal and anal), lips.
- Remove the product only after 12 hours of application by taking a bath or shower.
- Apply the product again to any part of the body that has been washed within 12 hours of the initial application. For example, after each hand washing, reapply the product between the fingers and under the nails.
- The treatment can be repeated 7 days later for infected individuals.

### The treatment can:

- Cause irritation and a burning sensation. It is not recommended to stop treatment for these reasons.

### AND

- Dry out the skin. In this case, it is possible to apply a moisturizing cream to relieve itching. Itching may persist for several weeks, even after effective treatment.