



Scabies – At-a-Gance

Definition	Scabies is a parasitic infestation of the skin, by a mite which causes an itchy rash (worse at night) and is passed between people by prolonged or frequent skin-to-skin / sexual contact. Scabies may also be spread through prolonged contact with an infested person's clothing, bedding, or other items. Transmission of infestation through casual contact such as a handshake is unlikely. People who are immunocompromised may develop Norwegian / Crusted Scabies. Diagnosis is made on microscopic identification of the mites, eggs, or faecal pellets from the scrapings of skin burrows. Symptoms may take 4-8 weeks to develop.
Management	For Crusted / Norwegian Scabies, isolation in a single room, with the door closed, and a Contact Precaution sign at the door is recommended, until treatment has been completed. If a single room is not available or the patient is moved out of the single room, please discuss with Infection Prevention and Control. Disinfestation: Clothing, and bed linen used by the patient in 48 to 72 hours prior to treatment must be washed. Bring linen trolley to the bedside and avoid shaking of linen. Place used linen in red alginate bags then into usual white plastic linen bag. Treatment for Scabies will include topical preparations applied as per manufacturer's guidelines, in combination with an oral anti-parasitic. Patients should not be washed before treatment as this may result in treatment being absorbed into the bloodstream too quickly before the mites are affected. Gloves and aprons must be worn for all direct patient contact and contact with patient's surroundings. A single-use long-sleeved disposable gown should be used, where any part of the staff uniform is not protected by an ordinary apron and is expected to come in contact with the patient. Decontaminate hands according to the WHO 5 moments, before and after glove use.
Cleaning	Patient equipment should be cleaned with Green Clinell wipes. Upon discharge or transfer of the patient, the bed space or isolation room must be terminally cleaned.

Stop isolation when?	Patients with Crusted Scabies must be nursed in isolation until treatment has been completed. Itching may last for up to 4 weeks, even if treatment has been successful in eliminating the infestation.
-------------------------------------	---