

**GREENWICH CENTRAL SCHOOL
HEALTH OFFICES**

SCABIES

Scabies is an infestation caused by a microscopic mite that burrows in the skin, prompting an allergic response. The mite lays eggs just under the top surface of the skin. Seven to ten days later, the allergic response to the mites and their waste products occurs, and severe itching and a rash develop. Itching is most intense at night. The rash may progress from small red bumps to scattered scaly or crusty lesions. The favored parts of the body are crevices such as finger web spaces, wrists, underarms, elbows, breasts, buttocks and genital area. They may also occur on the head, neck, palms and soles of feet.

Symptoms

Small, red bumps; intense itching and secondary changes (scaling, crusting, redness) from scratching. Burrows, or slightly raised, thread-like lines less than 1/8 inch in length, sometimes with a minute black speck visible at one end.

Prevention

Even if your personal hygiene is excellent, you may still develop Scabies if you are in contact with someone with this infestation. Nevertheless, maintain good hygiene.

Treatment

Scabies can be treated effectively with products your doctor can prescribe. These preparations should be used on all household members. The doctor will make special considerations for infants, persons with seizure history, and women who are pregnant or breast-feeding. All family members' bed sheets and recently worn clothing must be washed and dried with hot temperatures. Garments that cannot be washed may be sealed in plastic trash bags for ten days to kill the mites.

All family members and others who have direct contact with the affected person are also candidates for treatment. They may not be aware of the infestation because the allergic response with rash and itching may not occur for one to three weeks or up to as late as two months after the initial exposure.

When to Call Your Doctor

If the symptoms of Scabies develop, see a doctor as soon as possible. Treatment should begin on the same night of diagnosis.

Prognosis

As miserable as the itchiness and aggravation of scabies can be, it is an otherwise benign, curable condition.