

# SCABIES

## Definition

**Scabies** are little bugs (mites) that burrow under the skin and cause severe itching (most often at night) and little red bumps. They are so small that they can only be seen with a microscope. They rarely attack the skin above the neck, except in infants; usually they are found at the webs of the fingers, and in the abdomen and pubic area. Usually more than one person in a family has them.

## Scabies Medicine

Apply **Kwell lotion** to every square inch of the body from the neck down. (Infants younger than 1 year old also need Kwell carefully applied to the head and face. Don't forget the navel, between the toes, or other creases. Areas that don't seem infected should still be covered. Also use it to wash clothes, towels, sheets, and other shared items. Eight hours later, give your child a bath and remove the Kwell. (Babies younger than 1 year of age should have the Kwell washed off in 4 hours) Leaving Kwell on longer than this can cause side effects. If your child is a thumb-sucker, cover the hands, because swallowing Kwell can be quite harmful. For more severe rashes, repeat Kwell treatment once in 1 week.

## PREGNANT WOMEN

Use **Eurax** instead of Kwell. Apply the first coat as above. Twenty-four (24) hours later, apply a second coat. Forty-eight (48) hours later, wash the Eurax off. The Eurax 2-day treatment needs to be repeated in 1 week.

## ITCHING

The itching and rash may normally last for 2 to 3 weeks after successful treatment with Kwell or Eurax. This itch can be helped by frequent cool baths without using soap, followed by **0.5% hydrocortisone cream**, which you can buy without a prescription.

## CONTAGIOUSNESS

Children may return to school after one treatment with Kwell.

## FAMILY CONTACTS

Scabies is highly contagious. The symptoms take 30 days to develop after exposure. Therefore, everyone living in the house should be treated preventively with Kwell. Close contacts of the infected child (such as a friend who spent the night or a babysitter) should also be treated.

## CLEANING THE HOUSE

Machine wash all of your child's sheets, pillowcases, underwear, pajamas, and recently worn clothing. Blankets can be put away for 3 days. Vacuuming is the best way to rid furniture and other unwashables of scabies. Scabies cannot live outside the human body for more than 3 days.

Call your child's physician or The Children's Hospital Ambulatory Care Center if you have other questions or concerns.