

# INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

## Scabies



Dear parents,

A child is/children are infected with scabies in your community facility. Scabies is an infectious skin disease in humans, caused by the scabies mite. It is particularly common for mites to spread in places where people live in close proximity to each other. This leads to clusters of disease, especially in community facilities. The usual form of scabies can be transmitted through **close skin-to-skin contact** over a period of **at least 5-10 minutes** (e.g. sleeping together in a bed, cuddling, breastfeeding, caring for young children/people with the disease) (**shaking hands is not close enough for it to happen!**). Help us to find out which children are affected, as this is the only way to end the disease crisis quickly. It can affect anyone – even people who take good care of themselves - so don't be embarrassed!

### What should a person who has been in contact be aware of?

#### I have had **CLOSE** contact:

If you/your child have been in close contact with a person infected with scabies, you/your child may pass the scabies mite to other person, even before you notice the symptoms yourself (the period between infection and the outbreak of the disease is 2-6 weeks). Because of this, an examination should be carried out by a doctor. They will decide whether there is also any need for preventative treatment.

#### I have **NOT** had **CLOSE** contact:

For preventative reasons, you/your child should:

- avoid intensive skin contact for around 5-6 weeks
- keep a close watch for symptoms during this period, and
- see a doctor immediately in the event of any initial signs of an infestation of scabies mites.

In the event of an outbreak, it may be necessary for **ALL** people who have been in contact, and their family members, to be examined as soon as possible, and for preventative medical treatment to be arranged if necessary.

### Which symptoms occur in the event of an infection?

Burning skin and intensive itching (even in unaffected areas), which is especially noticeable when the bed is warm at night, are often the initial signs of the disease. The mites prefer warm areas of the skin, e.g. between fingers and toes, in the armpits and groin, and in the anal and genital areas. Characteristic changes to the skin are: redness, blisters, nodules and/or scabs. Itching can even last for a few weeks after successful treatment.

### What should you do if you or your child display symptoms?

See a doctor immediately, and inform the community facility and any people in the vicinity who have been in contact with you or your child (family, housemates, care staff). Scabies does not heal by itself. Treatment is carried out by means of extensive application of a cream, taking a tablet, or both. It is recommended to shower before treatment (and then dry your skin well afterwards!), and cut your nails. Cream should generally be applied to the entire body from the neck down. The head and face can be left out unless the skin there is also affected.

#### The following hygiene measures should be observed:

- ❖ Change underwear, bed linen and duvets every 12-24 hours
- ❖ Change hand towels twice daily
- ❖ Wash any clothes, bed linen, hand towels and other objects which have been in contact with your body for at least 10 minutes, at a minimum of 60°C, or treat them e.g. with hot steam equipment
- ❖ If this is not possible → Pack objects and textiles in plastic bags and store at a minimum of least 21°C for 72 hours. Alternative, the object can be stored at -25°C
- ❖ Upholstery, sofa cushions or textile floor coverings (if people with the disease have lain on them with bare skin) can be vacuumed with a strong vacuum cleaner (dispose of filter and bag afterwards); alternatively, do not use for at least 48 hours
- ❖ Objects with which the patient has only had brief contact do not need to be treated

### Will my child have to stay at home because of scabies?

A person infected with scabies (child/staff) should be kept away from the community facility. The patient must submit a declaration to the facility from the presiding doctor about the visit which took place, and the treatment that has been correctly carried out by parents, before return to the facility is permitted. (Enclosure 2).

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Organisation stamp

# DECLARATION

## for the community facility

(school, care centre, kindergarten, crèche)

Please complete this declaration and give it to the person in charge of the facility when your child returns to the facility after monitoring, and treatment if necessary, and is free of scabies.

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Name of child

*Please tick as applicable:*

**Scabies mites have NOT been found in my child:**

- I have read the information for parents on scabies
- My child has been examined by a doctor.
- Preventative treatment with (name) ..... has been prescribed and carried out correctly.
- As the infection may be transmitted to other people even before any symptoms are noticed, we will avoid intensive skin contact for around 5-6 weeks, and during this period, we will keep a close watch and see a doctor immediately in the event of any initial signs of a scabies infestation.

**Scabies mites have been found in my child:**

- I have carried out an initial treatment for my child with the solution (name)..... and will repeat said treatment if it is recommended by my doctor.
- I will examine my child for a further 5-6 weeks for scabies, twice weekly, after successful treatment.
- The entire family have been examined for scabies by a doctor, and also treated if necessary. The entire family will examine themselves for 5-6 weeks for scabies twice weekly, and repeat treatment in the event of another infestation.

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Date

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Signature of parent/guardian