



# FACTS

## About...



HEALTH DEPARTMENT

# SCABIES

### *What is it?*

Scabies are mites that cause itchy skin. The scabies mite burrows into the skin to lay eggs. The itchiness comes from your body's reaction to the mite.

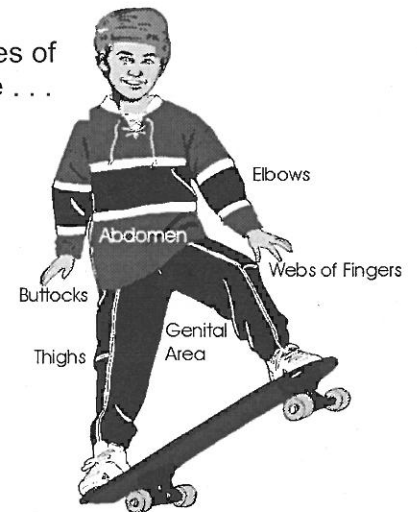
### *How is it spread?*

Scabies infestations result from direct contact with the skin of a person who has scabies or from sharing clothing, bedding or towels which may be infested.

### *What do I look for?*

Mites are hard to see. Small red lines on the skin are usually the only sign of infestation. The skin is extremely itchy and may be worse at night. It may take up to 6 weeks before you see the red lines or before the itching develops. Scabies does not usually affect the scalp or face. **To find out if you have scabies, see your doctor.**

The most common sites of scabies infestation are . . .



### *How is it treated?*

Medications are available to treat scabies. They can be purchased without a prescription at a pharmacy. Directions should be **followed carefully. DO NOT TREAT MORE OFTEN THAN RECOMMENDED.**

Itching may last for 1-2 weeks after treatment. This is caused by the dead mites and eggs under the skin. It clears when the skin sheds naturally.

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For more information  
**DURHAM REGION HEALTH DEPARTMENT**  
905-668-7711 1-800-841-2729 or [www.durham.ca](http://www.durham.ca)



**ON THE SAME DAY THAT YOU GIVE TREATMENT:**

- Collect all clothes, towels and bed linens used in the last 48 hours by the person – wash items in hot water and dry at hottest setting – it is not necessary to treat jackets or hats
- All family members and anyone who has had contact with the infected person should be treated for scabies
- Children should stay home from school or day care until first treatment has been initiated

***How can I protect myself?***

- Treat all household contacts
- Keep fingernails short to help prevent infection caused by scratching
- Avoid sharing clothes and other personal items

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