TREATMENT FOR SCABIES

Scabies infestation is caused by a tiny mite which burrows under the skin and causes a generalized itching rash most common on the fingers, wrists and genitals. It can be spread by contact with the body or clothing of an infected person. The mite does not live away from the human body for more than a few days or at temperature above 140 degrees or below freezing.

1. Bathe entire body with warm soapy water. Pat dry.

2. Apply prescribed lotion or cream to all areas of the body, from neck down to the toes, especially between fingers and toes and in all folds of the body. Keep solution out of the eyes and face.

3. Leave on the body for 6 – 8 hours, re-applying to the arms or fingers if they are washed. Usually it is easiest to apply it at bedtime.

4. Remove lotion or cream with warm soapy water with a shower or bath after 8 hours or in the morning.

5. Repeat treatment 10-14 days after first treatment to kill any remaining eggs that have hatched.

6. Wash all clothing in water over 140 degrees. Clothing and bedding which cannot be washed can be put in a hot dryer for 30 minutes. Unwashable items can also be isolated in a plastic bag, sealed and left for about 3 days. The mites will not survive off a body for this long.

7. Exposure to air for one week without touching the body will kill the mites. Books, rugs and other materials need not be fumigated. Vacuum the carpeting and furniture well.

8. Children may return to school once therapy has been started. It is reasonable to notify the parents of a child’s playmates or a school nurse or a day-care operator.

9. Family members, or their contacts, may not develop the itch for up to 6 weeks from the time they are exposed to the mite.

10. Continued itching does not mean that the scabies mite is still living there. It may take several weeks for the itching to subside.