I think I have scabies... What should I do?

IMPORTANT
This document provides information about common scabies. In case of crusted or Norwegian scabies, please follow the recommendations of your medical team and the appropriate treatment.

What is scabies?

- A skin infection caused by a parasite invisible to the naked eye.
- Can be treated by the application of cream all over the body.
- An infected person may be contagious before symptoms appear.

What are the symptoms?

- Itching that is especially prevalent at night.
- Redness or scabs in the shape of small tunnels. The redness can often be found between the fingers, under the armpits, on the buttocks or close to genital organs. They can sometimes be found in other areas of the body.

How can I know if I have scabies?

If you have any symptoms, consult with a physician.

If you do not have access to a physician, call Info-Santé (811, option 1) or your pharmacist to get recommendations.

What can I do if I have scabies?

- Apply the prescribed cream.
- Thoroughly clean your clothing and your house (see the box below).
- Notify the school, daycare, or workplace. You may return once the first treatment is completed. You are no longer contagious.
- **Notify the following people if you've been in contact with them in the last 6 weeks:**
  - friends and family that have slept in the same house as you
  - sexual or intimate partners
  - people with whom you have had multiple short skin-to-skin contacts
  - people with whom you have had skin-to-skin contact that lasted at least 10 minutes
  - people with whom you have shared clothing or towels
- Apply the second treatment 7 days later or as prescribed.

How to clean your clothing and your house?

Use the following method only once after applying the prescribed cream.

- Wash clothing, towels, and bedsheets in hot water.
- Dry them in the dryer for 20 minutes, on the high heat setting.
- Wash all clothing, towels and bedding used up to 4 days before the first treatment (cream).
- Put all non-washable objects (pillows, plush toys) in a closed plastic bag for at least 4 days.
- Vacuum.
- If your child is in shared custody, both homes must go through the same process.

Washing your clothing and towels is very important to ensure you will not be infected a second time.

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I think I've been in contact with someone who has scabies...

How is scabies transmitted?

The parasite cannot jump or fly from one person to another.

There is an elevated risk of infection when:

- You have skin-to-skin contact with an infected person (for 10 minutes or more, or repeatedly).
- You share clothing, towels, or bedsheets.

If this is your situation AND you do not present symptoms:

- Consult a pharmacist to get cream.
- Apply the prescribed cream only once.
- You can keep going to school, daycare, or work.
- Monitor your symptoms.

There is a very low risk or no risk when:

- You've only had brief skin contact or touched an object belonging to an infected person.
- You were beside an infected person or someone who shares a room with you.

If this is your situation AND you do not present symptoms:

- No treatment necessary
- No matter your health condition, you can still go to work or school, even if someone there has scabies.
- Protect yourself by limiting skin-to-skin contact and avoiding sharing clothes.

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