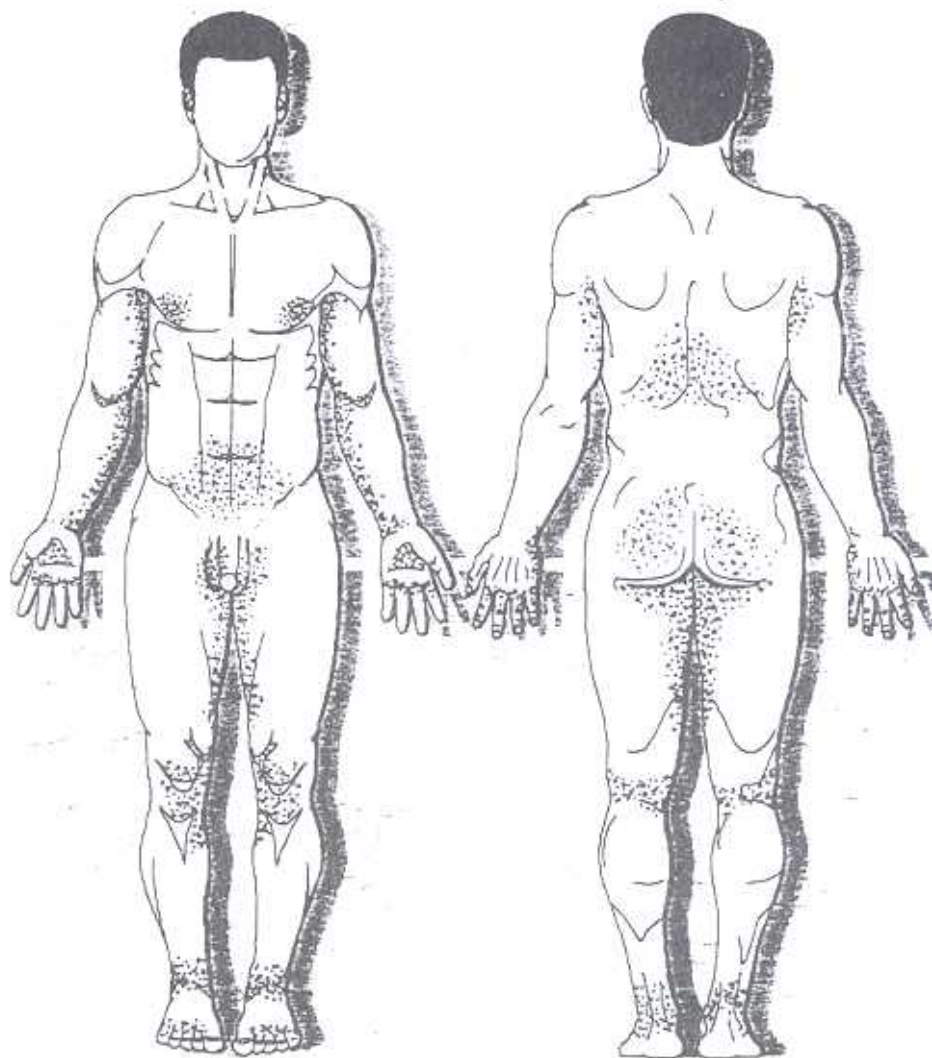


SCABIES

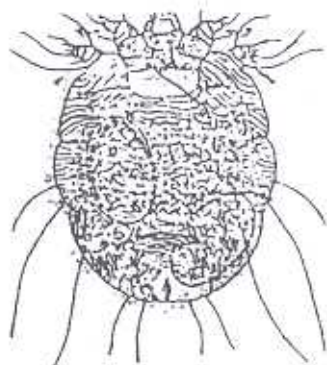
(THE ITCH)

What it is.

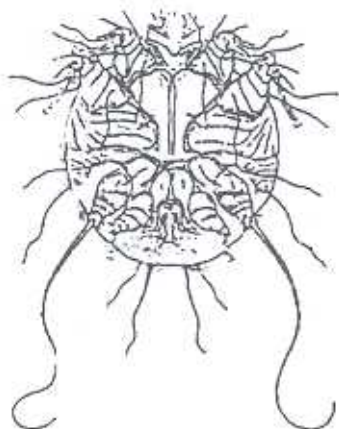
What you can do about it.



FEMALE



MALE



What is Scabies?

Scabies, also called **THE ITCH**, is a contagious disease caused by a mite that digs under the skin to lay eggs. Hatching produces young mites, and together with the adults cause excessive itching as they feed and move.

How do we get Scabies?

Mode of Transmission.

Direct skin to skin contact with an infected person. Affected persons may spread the infection on themselves by scratching, as the mites get under the fingernails and are transferred to other parts of the body.

What is the incubation period?

It takes about 2 to 6 weeks after contact for symptoms to develop.

Where to look for scabies?

- Between the fingers, front of wrist and elbows under the arm.
- On the skin around the nipples.
- On the abdomen.
- On the penis and thighs of the male.
- On the buttocks.
- Around the ankles.
- The groin area.

In babies, a rash may appear on the head, on the face, the palm of hands, the soles of feet, or sometimes all over the body.

What are the signs and symptoms of Scabies?

- Presence of rash in the areas mentioned above
- Itching especially at night while in bed.
- Appearance of skin sores in areas of itching.

How is Scabies treated?

There are a variety of creams and lotions for treating the mites, available at drugstores. However infected persons, all members of their household and close contacts should seek medical help immediately.

Complications such as kidney disease may occur, *especially in children.*

The use of Cream or Lotion for treating Scabies.

After you bathe, the cream must be applied carefully to all the skin from the neck down. Take care to apply cream between the toes and fingers and on the genitals.

If the face and scalp of babies are affected, cream should be applied to these areas as well. You may need to cover the hands with socks if the baby is likely to suck the fingers. *Do not apply the cream thickly to the skin, especially in the case of children.*

If you wash your hands during the course of treatment, *reapply cream to the hands.* The cream *must* be left on overnight. At the end of this period you should have a bath following which all clothing, underwear and bed linen should be washed. Ordinary washing is quite satisfactory. Your surroundings

should be thoroughly cleaned. Stuffed toys belonging to babies should also be cleaned.

One application is usually sufficient. Do not reapply. You should visit your doctor after one or two weeks. A second treatment is needed only if your doctor advises it. *Please note that itching may continue for some time after treatment.*

Preventive measures.

- Treat all members of the household.
- Treat all close contacts who may not reside in the home.
- Bathe regularly - use soap always. Wash linen and clothing regularly.
- All infected persons should receive prompt medical attention.
- Please visit your nearest Health Centre.