

How to treat scabies

It is best to treat scabies just before going to bed. Scabies will not go away without treatment. It is important to treat all areas of your body, even if some parts are not itchy! Enough cream/lotion should be provided to cover your entire body with a reasonable layer.

How and when to apply the cream



Before Bed

1. Cover the whole body with cream/lotion (Permethrin) before bed.
 - Start at your scalp, face, chin and ears.
 - Continue down your neck and cover all areas, including private parts and backside, until you get to the soles of your feet.
 - Make sure you apply cream between fingers, toes and under nails.
 - Apply enough cream to cover your entire body. Younger individuals may only require half a tube to complete coverage, whilst rangatahi and adults may require one or two tubes.
 - Women also need to apply permethrin under the breasts and around the nipples, as the scabies mite can burrow into these areas as well.
2. If you wash your hands following application of the cream, it is important to put the cream/lotion back on your hands before bed.
3. Sleep in normal attire, as long as these clothes are washed the next day as per next step.



The next morning

- After sleeping in the cream, have a bath or shower the next morning and wear clean clothing.
- Wash bedding, the clothing you wore while sleeping and replace your bed with clean sheets.



Bedding and Towels

- Sheets, pillowcases, towels and facecloths should be washed in hot water.
- It is not necessary to wash blankets, duvets or quilts. You can hang them out in the sun for a day. You can also take the mattress outside to air in direct sunlight.
- Make sure your bed is fitted with clean sheets etc prior to applying your lotion.
- Permethrin lotion or cream is safe in hapū mama, breastfeeding and younger children under New Zealand medical guidelines.



Hapū Māmā

- If you are breastfeeding, wash the permethrin from your nipples before you breastfeed, and then re-apply afterwards.



How to stop scabies from spreading



Clothing

- All clothes worn against the skin in the last week, prior and during lotion application, must be washed in hot water.
- If clothes cannot be washed, dryclean them or put them in a sealed plastic bag for four days to kill any scabies.



Household

- Vacuum all rooms in the house to catch any bugs on the floor.

What to expect after applying the cream/lotion.



When will the itching stop?

- The itchiness will not go away as soon as the treatment is finished but this does not mean that it has not worked.
- It might take up to four weeks for the itch to go away.
- In some cases you may feel itchier for a period of time.



What to do to help soothe the itching

- During this time you can apply the Itch-Soothe cream to help relieve the itch.
- You will need to repeat this process one week after applying the cream.



Will this one treatment work?

One treatment should be enough to cure scabies. If you still have the rash and itch after four weeks, then please contact your local public health service or school nurse.

There are other treatments for scabies that only a doctor or nurse practitioner can prescribe for, or the rash could be something else.

- During the itchy phase, there are measures that you can take to avoid further infection. Cutting nails, apply itch-soothe when body is cool and not hot. Dry skin – apply the creams given – Sorbolene which can also be used as a soap substitute in the shower and Emulsifying Cream.
- You can also take anti-histamines orally from pharmacy alongside itch-soothe cream to help with itch (if needed).

Remember: To work well, it is important your close contacts complete the same process (body, house, clothing/bedding/towels) to ensure you there is no re-infection.



Scan the QR code for a list of Public Health Contact Numbers from across the motu