

## SCABIES

### Definition

Infestation caused by the mite *Sarcoptes scabiei*. Any part of the body may be affected, and transmission is by skin to skin contact.

### Clinical features

#### Symptoms

- mites burrow into the skin where they lay eggs. The resulting offspring crawl out onto the skin and makes new burrows.
- absorption of mite excrement into skin capillaries generates a hypersensitivity reaction. The main symptom, which takes 4-6 wks to develop, is generalised itch – especially at night

#### Signs

- characteristic silvery lines may be seen in the skin where mites have burrowed.
- classic sites: interdigital folds, wrists, elbows, umbilical area, genital area and feet
- *Nodular Scabies*- papules or nodules seen at the site of mite infestation often affect the scrotum, axillae, back, or feet of children.
- *Crusted or Norwegian Scabies*- seen in young infants or immunosuppressed patients. Widespread mite infestation causing a hyperkeratotic and/or crusted generalized rash.

### Diagnosis

- the clinical appearance is usually typical, but there is often diagnostic confusion with other itching conditions such as eczema
- scrapings taken from burrows examined under light microscopy may reveal mites

### Management

#### General advice

- parents are given a detailed explanation of condition, and clear, accurate written information on applying the treatment
- treat everyone in the household or close contacts. Ignore pleas that someone does not itch; infected people can be asymptomatic and reinfect household members.
- change bedding, nightclothes & towels on night of treatment and clean them in a hot wash & hot iron after.

### Treatment

#### Infants: 2 months onwards

- Prementrin 5% lotion
  - one application and repeat another application after 2 weeks
  - to be applied to the whole body (may include the face if lesions are found on the face), overnight (8-12 hours) and washed off the following morning
- Crotamiton cream
  - applied to all lesions 3 times a day for 2 weeks (anti-pruritic, symptomatic relief)

#### Children: 6 years above

- Benzyl Benzoate Lotion (EBB) 12.5% (6-9 years); 25% (> 10 years)
  - applied to whole body from neck down; washed after 8-12 hrs; 3 consecutive nights
- Prementrin 5% lotion
  - one application and repeat another application after 2 weeks
  - applied to whole body overnight (8-12 hours); washed off the following morning.
- Sulpha (3-6%) with calamine
  - applied to all lesions 3 times a day for 5 days (anti-pruritic, symptomatic relief).
- antihistamine may also be helpful in relieving the itch.