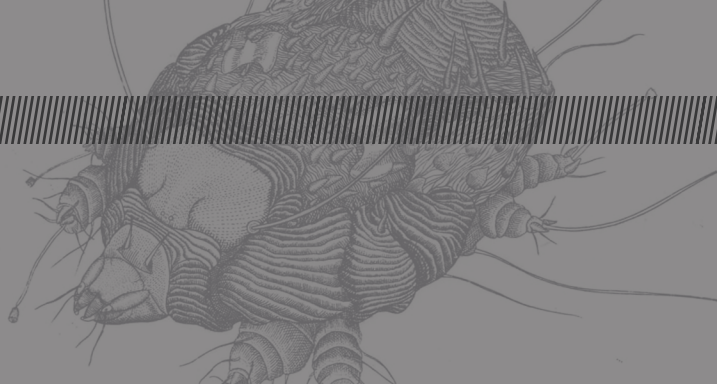


Scabies



What is scabies?

Scabies is a skin condition caused by scabies mites, which are tiny parasites that live in the top layer of your skin. They cause an itchy rash and skin irritation.

How common is it?

Scabies is a common infection affecting an estimated 1 million people in the U.S. every year.

How do you get it?

You can get scabies by sustained skin-to-skin contact with someone who has scabies—usually, during sex. But you can also get scabies if you sleep in a bed with someone who has scabies, are in direct physical contact for a sustained period of time with someone with scabies, or if you share clothes or towels with someone who has scabies.

How is it diagnosed?

We diagnose scabies by talking to you about your symptoms and history, and by examining any rashes or sores that you have.

How is it prevented?

Scabies is very contagious and can spread easily through skin-to-skin contact, so it's best to avoid touching or sharing clothes or towels with people you know who have scabies until they finish treatment.

What are the symptoms?

Scabies causes an intensely itchy rash that is worse at night or when showering. Oftentimes, people get scabies rashes:

- On their fingers and between their fingers
- On the skin folds of their wrists, elbows, and knees
- In their armpits
- Along their shoulder blades
- In the area around their nipples
- Around their waistline, or around the belly button
- In their pubic or groin area
- Along their lower butt and upper thighs
- On the sides and bottoms of their feet

The rash may look like small bumps, but it can also include tiny blisters and scales. Scratching the rash can cause sores that may become infected with bacteria.

How is it treated?

Scabies can be easily cured with a prescription cream medication. There are no over-the-counter scabies medications that can cure scabies. Never use a medication intended for veterinary or agricultural use! We can treat scabies at Magnet, the sexual health clinic at San Francisco AIDS Foundation.

Should my sex partners get treated too?

Let sex partners and household members know if you have had scabies so they can get treated, and so that they can machine wash all bedding, clothing and towels.

Special considerations with HIV?

Although they feed on blood, scabies mites cannot pass on HIV.

Sexual health services from San Francisco AIDS Foundation

Get free sexual health services including STI & HIV testing, PrEP, PEP, anal health care, harm reduction supplies, gender-affirming hormones & more.

We can test and treat scabies at Magnet, the sexual health clinic at San Francisco AIDS Foundation.

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