



Scabies - Guidance on Management

This procedural document supersedes: PAT/IC 7 v.8 - Scabies - Guidance on Management



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Amendment Form

Version	Date Issued	Brief Summary of Changes	Author
Version 9		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 4.7 added to include isolation and linen requirements • Oral treatment – Added information • Appendix 1 updated • Brand name removed from treatment • Repeated information removed 	Kelly Simpson
Version 8	29 October 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section added on ‘Patients lacking capacity’ 	Jayne Wicks
Version 7	9 November 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treatment updated- in-line with British National Formulary 2017 • Presentation of treatment changed to simplify options • Rewording of policy throughout • References updated 	Jayne Wicks
Version 6	14 January 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated using the Trust’s format • Updated references 	Carol Scholey
Version 5	January 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title Change to ensure easy location of policy on the intranet • Section added on “Equality Impact Assessment” • Duties, Individual and Group Responsibilities reviewed • CSUs updated • Section 3 & 4 amalgamated • Treatment updated – use of oral medication • References updated 	Carol Scholey, Infection Prevention and Control
Version 4	March 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duties, Individual and Group Responsibilities, Education and Training sections added • Sections numbered for better clarity. 	Infection Prevention and Control Team

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1 INTRODUCTION

In order to comply with the Health and Social Care Act 2008, Doncaster & Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is required to have in place and operate effective management systems for the prevention and control of healthcare associated infections (HCAIs). Scabies is an intensely itchy skin infestation caused by the human parasite *Sarcoptes Scabiei*. The main symptom of scabies is intense itching that's worse at night. It also causes a skin rash on areas where the mites have burrowed. Early detection and treatment of scabies is essential to reduce the risk of outbreaks within the hospital environment.

2 PURPOSE

The principles of this policy are to:

- Provide information to Trust staff who are involved in the care of patients with scabies or suspected of having scabies.
- Provide information on what scabies is and how to manage and treat a skin infestation.

3 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This policy covers infection prevention and control management issues for Trust staff, this includes:

- Employees
- Agency/Locum/Bank Staff/all other contracted workers
- Occupational Health if Staff require treatment

Each individual member of staff, volunteer or contracted worker within the Trust is responsible for complying with the standards set out in this Policy. They need to be aware of their personal responsibilities in preventing the spread of infection. It is the responsibility of Directors and Managers to ensure compliance with this standard.

All staff working on Trust premises, outreach clinics and community settings, including Trust employed staff, agency and locum staff is responsible for adhering to this policy, and for reporting breaches of this policy to the person in charge and to their line manager.

Board of Directors: is responsible for ensuring the implementation of a Board to Ward culture and to support a Zero Tolerance approach to Health Care Associated Infections.

Divisions: are responsible for ensuring the policy is adhered to and for ensuring action is taken if staff fails to comply with the policy.

Consultant Medical Staff: are responsible for ensuring their team read and understand this policy, and adhere to the principles contained in it at all times.

Director of Infection Prevention and Control: is responsible for implementing infection and prevention and control strategies throughout the Trust.

Housekeeping responsibility: routinely maintain a clean environment to reduce level of environmental contamination.

Matrons: are responsible for ensuring dissemination of policy within their allocated areas of responsibility. Policy implementation assurance will be checked when applied on the ward.

Occupational Health: if an outbreak of Scabies is declared on a ward affecting patients and staff, Occupational Health to coordinate treatment of staff and give advice regarding treatment for close relatives. Patients will be treated by the Hospital and their close relatives advised to contact their GP for treatment.

On-call Managers: are responsible for providing senior and executive leadership to ensure implementation of this policy, and for ensuring infection risks are fully considered and documented when complex decisions need to be made regarding capacity and patient flow.

The Infection Prevention and Control Team: is responsible for providing expert advice in accordance with this policy, for supporting staff in its implementation, and assisting with risk assessment where complex decisions are required.

Ward and Department Managers: are responsible for ensuring all staff have read the policy and implement this when required within their area.

PATIENTS LACKING CAPACITY

Sometimes it will be necessary to provide care and treatment to patients who lack the capacity to make decisions related to the content of this policy. In these instances staff must treat the patient in accordance with the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA 2005).

- A person lacking capacity should not be treated in a manner which can be seen as discriminatory.
- Any act done for, or any decision made on behalf of a patient who lacks capacity must be done, or made, in the persons Best Interest* see definitions.
- Further information can be found in the MCA policy, and the Code of Practice, both available on the Extranet.

4 SCABIES

4.1 Scabies Information

Scabies is a common contagious skin infestation caused by the parasitic mite *Sarcoptes Scabiei*. It is a worldwide disease more common where overcrowded conditions prevail. Spread is usually through prolonged skin to skin contact with an infected person often within families, between sexual partners and between patients and care givers.

A scabies infestation starts when a female mite burrows into your skin. Male mites move between different burrow sites looking to mate. After mating, the male mite dies and the female begins to lay eggs, which hatch around three to four days later.

After hatching, the young mites move to the surface of the skin, where they mature into adults after 10 to 15 days. Male mites stay on the surface of the skin, while female mites burrow back into the skin to create a new burrow. The life cycle is then repeated.

4.2 Types of Scabies

There are two types of Scabies; both are caused by the same mite:

1) Classical Scabies

Classical scabies is found in people with normal immune systems. The number of mites causing infestation may be low.

2) Hyperkeratotic Scabies (Norwegian/crusted/atypical scabies)

This is a more severe form of scabies where thousands or even millions of scabies mites are present causing the skin to become thickened, scaled and crusted. This form of scabies is often found in the elderly or those with suppressed immune systems. Due to the high number of mites present in the exfoliating skin scales it is highly contagious.

4.3 Incubation Period

The incubation period is up to 8 weeks in people without previous exposure, this makes the spread of the disease difficult to identify and contain in healthcare settings. As a result of the extended incubation period there may be asymptomatic carriers who can re-infect others after treatment has been performed.

4.4 Transmission

- Scabies is usually spread through prolonged periods of skin-to-skin contact with an infected person. The mite cannot “jump” or “fly” from person to person it walks at approximately 2.5cm per minute on warm skin.
- It’s also possible, but rare, for scabies to be passed on by sharing clothing, towels and bedding with someone who is infected with scabies.

4.5 Symptoms

The main symptoms of the infection are caused through an allergic response to the presence of mite droppings and saliva. If a person has had a previous infection with the scabies mite, the immune response is rapid and itching develops within hours.

The main symptoms are:

- Severe itching particularly at night when your skin is warmer.
- Allergic rash.
- Erythematous papules, vesicles or itchy nodules, rash can be symmetrical.
- In Hyperkeratotic scabies the skin becomes thickened, scaled and crusted.

4.6 Diagnosis

An early diagnosis is essential in order to avoid transmission of the infestation. Diagnosis of scabies is usually made from the history and examination of the effected person, in addition to the history of their close contacts. Diagnosis can be confirmed by viewing mites under a microscope but this must be done by an experienced practitioner. Misdiagnosis is common because of the similarities between scabies and other pruritic skin disorders, such as psoriasis, insect bites and contact dermatitis. If in doubt an expert clinical opinion must be sought from a Dermatologist.

4.7 Isolation and linen

Patient with scabies should be isolated in a single room with the door closed until 24 hours after treatment has commenced (NHS England, 2023). Unless, they are Norwegian / crusted scabies when patient should be isolated until full treatment has been completed. Linen to be treated as infected.

5 TREATMENT (SEE APPENDIX 1 FOR TABLE)

5.1 Topical Treatment

1) Permethrin 5% cream

Child/Adult – Apply once weekly for 2 doses, apply 5% preparation over whole body including face, neck, scalp and ears then wash off after 8 to 12 hours. If hands are washed with soap within 8 hours of application they should be treated again.

- Can be used in pregnancy.
- Permethrin is licensed for use in children over 2 months of age. It is recommended that medical supervision should be sought before applying to children’s skin under 2 years of age. In crusted scabies more than 2 applications on consecutive days may be required. Advice must be obtained from medical staff/Dermatologist.
- Avoid eyes due to irritation.
- One tube of Permethrin is usually adequate for an average sized person however in obese patients more tubes will be required.
- This is a vanishing cream and so disappears on application. It should be continuously applied until it remains detectable on the skin surface.

2) Malathion Aqueous 0.5% Liquid (Derbac M)

Children over 6 months/Adults – Apply lotion once weekly for 2 doses, apply preparation over whole body and wash off after 24 hours. If hands are washed in this time with soap they should be retreated.

- Children under 6 months seek medical advice.
- Can be used in pregnancy.
- Aqueous preparations are preferable to alcoholic lotions, as they are less of an irritant to the skin and respiratory tract.

Applying Topical Treatment

- Ensure the skin is clean, dry and cool before application. A hot bath should be avoided as evidence suggests this could reduce its efficacy (BNF March 2020). All those being treated should have the treatment at the same time, to ensure that individuals do not re-infect one another.
- Apply the cream or lotion to the scalp, jaw line and all over the body including the genital area. Pay particular attention to the web of toes and fingers. Applying the cream at night before going to bed is usually the best time as it can be left on overnight.
- Healthcare staff applying the cream or lotion should wear protective clothing (gloves and an apron) these must be renewed between patients.
- When treating Patients with hyperkeratotic scabies long sleeve gowns and gloves must be worn.
- A second person is necessary when treating oneself, to ensure all the body is covered.
- Nails should be trimmed and medication applied with cotton wool buds underneath the nails and around the nail bed area.
- If any part of the body requires washing /cleaning during the treatment time schedule the cream/lotion will need to be reapplied after each wash e/g washing hands, changing continence products.
- The treatment should be left on for the recommended time period please check with the instruction leaflet how long treatment needs to remain on the skin.
- Remove medication by thorough washing of all areas of the skin to which it has been applied.
- Once the treatment has been applied and washed off, wash all bedding and clothing immediately on a hot wash cycle.
- In all inpatient areas bedding and clothing should be treated as infected linen and red alginate bags should be used.

5.2 Oral Treatment

1) Ivermectin

Scabies: in combination with topical drugs, for the treatment of hyperkeratotic (crusted or 'Norwegian') scabies that does not respond to topical treatment alone

- Medication given on a named patient basis within the UK. The decision to prescribe should only be undertaken after consultation with the Dermatology Departments.
- Topical treatments may also be applied in conjunction with the oral medication being given particularly in Crusted /Norwegian Scabies that does not respond to topical treatment alone. Patients with hyperkeratotic scabies may require 2 or 3 applications of acaricide on

consecutive days to ensure enough penetrates the skin crusts to kill all the mites. (BNF March 2020).

5.3 Additional Information for the Treatment of Children

- Children under the age of two may also have burrows on the face, neck, scalp, ears and soles of the feet. It is important to pay particular attention to the head, neck, flexor areas and the soles of the feet.
- Special care must be taken in the selection of acaricides.

6 TRAINING/ SUPPORT

The training requirements of staff will be identified through a training needs analysis. Role specific education will be delivered by the service lead.

Infection prevention and control must be included in individual Annual Professional Development Appraisal and any training needs for infection prevention and control addressed.

It is an expectation for all clinical staff to attend IPC training as per local Training Needs Analysis, which will be captured by the Training and Education Department via OLM system.

7 MONITORING COMPLIANCE WITH THE PROCEDURAL DOCUMENT

What is being Monitored	Who will carry out the Monitoring	How often	How Reviewed/ Where Reported to
Compliance with treatment application, first and second applications	Ward staff caring for individual patients. IP&C/Occupational Health will coordinate if outbreak occurs.	Treatment seven days apart. As required when policy implemented	IP&CP will complete the alert review on patients as required. Incident report will be completed for non-compliance.

In addition to the above the Infection Prevention and Control Team will review this policy in the following circumstances:-

- When new national or international guidance are received.
- When newly published evidence demonstrates need for change to current practice.
- Every three years routinely.

8 DEFINITIONS

BNF: British National Formulary.

Best Interest - There is no single definition of Best Interest. Best Interest is determined on an individual basis. All factors relevant to the decision must be taken into account, family and friends should be consulted, and the decision should be in the Best interest of the individual. Please see S5 of the MCA code of practice for further information.

9 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Trust aims to design and implement services, policies and measures that meet the diverse needs of our service, population and workforce, ensuring that none are disadvantaged over others. Our objectives and responsibilities relating to equality and diversity are outlined within our equality schemes. When considering the needs and assessing the impact of a procedural document any discriminatory factors must be identified.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been conducted on this procedural document in line with the principles of the Equality Analysis Policy (CORP/EMP 27) and the Fair Treatment for All Policy (CORP/EMP 4).

The purpose of the EIA is to minimise and if possible remove any disproportionate impact on employees on the grounds of race, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation or religious belief. No detriment was identified. See Appendix 2.

10 ASSOCIATED TRUST PROCEDURAL DOCUMENTS

- Hand Hygiene (PAT/IC 5)
- Isolation Policy (PAT/IC 16)
- Standard Infection Prevention and Control Precautions Policy (PAT/IC 19)
- Mental Capacity Act 2005 - Policy and Guidance including Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS) - PAT/PA 19
- Privacy and Dignity Policy - PAT/PA 28
- Fair Treatment for All Policy – CORP/EMP 4
- Equality Analysis Policy – CORP/EMP 27

11 DATA PROTECTION

Any personal data processing associated with this policy will be carried out under 'Current data protection legislation' as in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016.

For further information on data processing carried out by the trust, please refer to our Privacy Notices and other information which you can find on the trust website:

<https://www.dbth.nhs.uk/about-us/our-publications/information-governance/>

12 REFERENCES

British National Formulary (March 2020) BMJ Group. London. Accessed 4/9/17
Public Health England

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/scabies/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

Wilson J. (2019) *Infection Control in Clinical Practice* 3rd edition. Elsevier. London.

N.H.S England. 2022. National infection prevention and control manual for England. London. Department of Health. Available at: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/national-infection-prevention-and-control-manual-nipcm-for-england/chapter-1-standard-infection-control-precautions-sicps/> (accessed 16/08/2023).

N.H.S England. 2023. NHS England Infection prevention and control A to Z list (draft). Available at: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/national-infection-prevention-and-control/> (accessed 16/08/2023)

APPENDIX 1 - TREATMENT

First Choice Treatment: Permethrin 5%

Drug	Age	Dose	Quantity	Notes, Cautions/Contra-indications
Permethrin 5% dermal cream	2 months to 2 year	Apply to the whole body, including the scalp, face, neck and ears. Leave on for 8-12 hours or overnight. Wash off. Single application is sufficient. Medical supervision required.	1/8 – 1/4 of 30g tube	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid contact with eyes • Do not use on broken or secondarily infected skin • For children under 2 years medical supervision is required • Can be used in pregnancy and breastfeeding
	2 to 11 years	Apply to the whole body, including the scalp, face, neck and ears. Leave on for 8-12 hours or overnight. Wash off. Repeat after 7 days.	1/4 to ½ of 30g tube	
	12 years onwards	Apply to the whole body, including the scalp, face, neck and ears. Leave on for 8-12 hours or overnight. Wash off. Repeat after 7 days.	30-60g (1-2 tubes)	

Second Choice Treatment: Malathion (Derbac M)

Drug	Age	Dose	Quantity	Notes, Cautions/Contra-indications
Malathion 0.5% aqueous liquid	6 months to 1 year	Apply to the whole body, including the scalp, face, neck and ears. Leave on for 24 hours. Wash off	100ml	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid contact with eyes • Do not use on broken or secondarily infected skin • Do not use more than once a week for three weeks at a time • For children under six months, medical supervision is required • Can be used in pregnancy and breastfeeding
	>1 year	Apply to the whole body, including the scalp, face, neck and ears. Leave on for 24 hours. Wash off. Repeat after 7 days.(unlicensed use see notes in BNF)	200ml	

APPENDIX 2 – EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT - PART 1 INITIAL SCREENING

Service/Function/Policy/Project/Strategy	Division/Executive Directorate and Department	Assessor (s)	New or Existing Service or Policy?	Date of Assessment
Scabies - PAT/IC 7 v.9	Corporate Nursing, IPC	Kelly Simpson IPC	Existing Policy	June 2023
1) Who is responsible for this policy? Name of Division/Directorate: Corporate Nursing, IPC				
2) Describe the purpose of the service / function / policy / project/ strategy? Who is it intended to benefit? What are the intended outcomes? This policy has been updated using the latest national guidance for the treatment of scabies. It informs Trust staff on the treatment options of patients with scabies, and frequency of treatment to aid elimination of the scabies mite. It also provides information about what scabies is.				
3) Are there any associated objectives? Legislation, targets national expectation, standards who is it intended to benefit? None				
4) What factors contribute or detract from achieving intended outcomes? Nil				
5) Does the policy have an impact in terms of age, race, disability, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marriage/civil partnership, Maternity/pregnancy and religion/belief? Nil				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If yes, please describe current or planned activities to address the impact [e.g. Monitoring, consultation] 				
6) Is there any scope for new measures which would promote equality? [any actions to be taken] N/A				
7) Are any of the following groups adversely affected by the policy?				
Protected Characteristics	Affected?	Impact		
a) Age	None	Neutral		
b) Disability	None	Neutral		
c) Gender	None	Neutral		
d) Gender Reassignment	None	Neutral		
e) Marriage/Civil Partnership	None	Neutral		
f) Maternity/Pregnancy	None	Neutral		
g) Race	None	Neutral		
h) Religion/Belief	None	Neutral		
i) Sexual Orientation	None	Neutral		
8) Provide the Equality Rating of the service / function /policy / project / strategy – tick (✓) outcome box				
Outcome 1 ✓	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4	
<i>*If you have rated the policy as having an outcome of 2, 3 or 4, it is necessary to carry out a detailed assessment and complete a Detailed Equality Analysis form in Appendix 4</i>				
Date for next review: June 2026				
Checked by: Infection Prevention and Control Practitioner/ Team			Date: June 2023	

