

Scabies Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

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Scope of SOP

This SOP provides guidance for CLAL staff at hotels to ensure proper procedures are followed during a scabies outbreak.

Scabies

What is it?

Scabies is a skin infestation caused by the human itch mite (*Sarcoptes scabiei*). These microscopic mites burrow into the upper layer of the skin, where they live and lay eggs. Scabies is highly contagious and can spread rapidly through close physical contact in environments such as families, childcare settings, schools, nursing homes, or prisons. Due to its contagious nature, treatment is often recommended for entire groups in contact with the infected person.

Symptoms

Symptoms of scabies typically appear within six weeks after initial exposure. They may develop more rapidly in individuals who have had scabies before. Key symptoms include a rash resembling pimples and intense itching, which tends to worsen at night. Persistent scratching can lead to sores that may become infected.

Treatment of Scabies

Treatment for scabies involves eliminating the infestation with prescription ointments, creams, or lotions that are applied directly to the skin. Oral medications may also be prescribed. It is advisable to apply the medication at night when mites are most active.

Ensure strict adherence to the doctor's instructions:

- Repeat the treatment after one week.
- The prescribed lotion or cream must be applied to the entire body and reapplied after washing (e.g., after washing hands).
- Additional medications may be prescribed to alleviate itching (e.g., antihistamines), treat infections from scratching (e.g., antibiotics), or reduce inflammation (e.g., steroid creams).

Reducing the Spread of Scabies

- Treat all potentially exposed individuals simultaneously to prevent re-exposure and reinfection. Ensure each person receives two treatments, spaced one week apart.
- Scabies mites cannot survive more than 2-3 days away from human skin.
- Staff entering affected rooms must wear appropriate PPE and gloves and adhere to standard handwashing procedures.
- Machine wash and dry bedding and clothing worn or used close to the skin using hot water and high-heat dryer cycles. Alternatively, items can be dry-cleaned. Items unable to be laundered should be sealed in a plastic bag for several days to a week.
- Immediately wash bedding and clothing after each treatment cycle.
- Clean and vacuum rooms thoroughly where an infected individual stayed. Use of pesticide sprays or fogs for environmental disinfection is generally unnecessary and discouraged.
- Infected individuals should isolate until completing the first treatment cycle.

This SOP ensures CLAL staff are equipped to manage and mitigate the spread of scabies effectively, adhering to recommended medical protocols and infection control measures.