

# Scabies (mate māngeongoe riha)

## Information Sheet

Te Whatu Ora  
Health New Zealand

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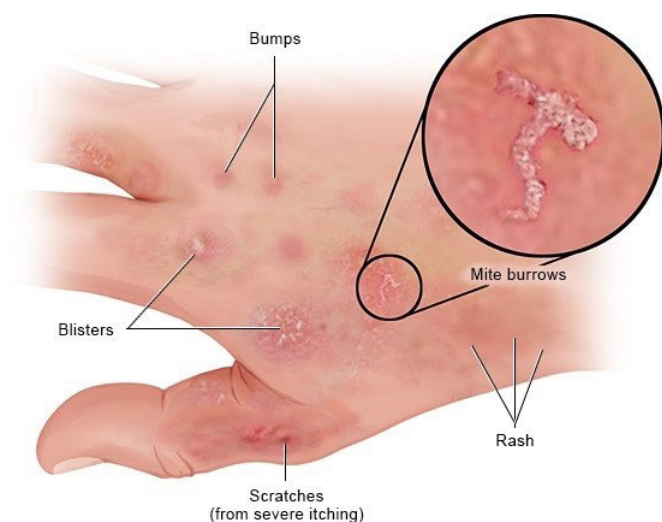
### What is it?

Scabies is a highly contagious skin infestation that is spread by skin-to-skin contact. It can also be transferred via clothing and bedding. It is caused by tiny insects that "burrow" under the skin, laying eggs as they go. It can take 3-6 weeks from getting scabies before you notice a rash or itch.

### What are the signs and symptoms?

Sometimes you can see the mite burrows and small nodules surrounded by red patches. It is very itchy (especially at night or when warm) and can cause more serious infections if left untreated. Scabies may also make children's existing skin conditions worse.

Scabies like to lay eggs in all the warm body areas, including the wrist, between fingers, armpits, knees, and groin.



### Treatment and Prevention:

- Scabies will NOT go away without treatment. All household members should be treated at the same time (even those who are not itchy).
- See your Pharmacy, or Primary Care provider, to be assessed and get treatment.
- It is very important to follow all the treatment and washing instructions given to you.
- Keep fingernails short and follow healthy food and hygiene practices to prevent things from getting worse.
- Children can return to school, or ECE/TKR after at least one day after starting treatment.
- The itch may last for many weeks, even after successful treatment.

For more information visit:

[healthify.nz/health-a-z/s/scabies/](https://healthify.nz/health-a-z/s/scabies/)