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Dear Parent or Guardian

- A student at school has scabies and is being treated.
 Your child may have scabies.

WHAT IS SCABIES?

Scabies is a fairly common disease of the skin caused by a microscopic mite. Scabies mites burrow into the skin producing pimple-like irritations or linear burrows which contain the mites and their eggs. The areas of skin most often affected by scabies include the webs and sides of the fingers, the back of the hands, the wrist area, the inner elbow area, the waist, the thighs, the groin area, the buttocks, and under the arms. The most prominent symptom of scabies is intense itching, particularly at night.

HOW DOES SCABIES SPREAD?

Scabies are transferred by direct skin-to-skin contact. Indirect transfer from clothing or bed-clothes can occur only if these articles have been contaminated by infected people immediately beforehand. The scabies mite cannot survive very long in clothing or linens, it cannot “jump” from one person to another.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD HAS SCABIES?

1. Watch your child and family members for signs of scabies. See your health care provider if symptoms develop. Scabies must be diagnosed by a doctor.
2. Treatment involves the application of an anti-scabies skin lotion or cream. Use the lotion or cream as directed. Do not send your child to school until 24 hours after you have applied the anti-scabies lotion or cream. Treatment also consists of the laundering in hot water of all clothing and bed sheets used by the infected person in the 48 hours (2 days) prior to treatment.
3. Sometimes itching may persist for 1-2 weeks after treatment, but this should not be regarded as treatment failure or reinfestation.
4. Inform the school staff that your child is being treated for scabies.
5. To prevent the spread of scabies, good hygiene is essential. Wash hands often, shampoo hair frequently, wear clean clothes daily, and don't exchange clothes with others. Avoid physical contact with infected individuals and their belongings, especially clothing and bedding.
6. Teach your child to avoid touching or scratching the infected area. Teach your child to wash their hands thoroughly, if touching or scratching occurs. Trim finger nails short to discourage scratching. Clean underneath fingernails, under running water.
7. For further information, contact the school nurse.