

# ENVIRONMENT OF CARE

Cleaning of the environment is a key component of scabies control. Research has demonstrated that scabies mites can survive off of the human host for 2 to 5 days. Therefore, disinfecting the surrounding environment of a scabies case can prevent potential re-infestation and transmission. When cleaning the immediate environment of a patient with scabies, it is always advised that gloves and gowns be worn.

## **Bedding and Linens**

- ▲ All bed linens, including pillowcases, sheets, blankets, and bedspreads must be changed and laundered during or immediately after the scabicide has been administered to the patient.
- ▲ All used towels and washcloths must be laundered.
- ▲ Repeat the above steps after scabicide treatment is completed.

## **Clothing and Personal Items**

- ▲ All washable personal items and clothing worn in the past week by the case must be laundered. If laundry is sent home with family, it is recommend that the wash load is separate from other family materials and is handled with gloves (preferably disposable or washable). Wash water temperature should be 120 °F or 50 °C (hottest possible setting) for at least 10 minutes.
- ▲ Clothing and personal items that are contained in a closet or drawer and have not touched other items worn or handled by the symptomatic case in the past week do not need to be laundered or disinfected.
- ▲ All non-washable items such as shoes, coats, and stuffed animals worn or touched in the last week by the scabies case should be placed in a plastic bag for transport. Place materials in a hot dryer for 20 minutes or seal the materials in a plastic bag for one week (7 days) at room temperature or hotter. An alternate method is to seal materials in a bag and freeze at -20 °C for 12 hours.
- ▲ Discard any topical creams, ointments, or lotions used by the symptomatic case unless the products were dispensed by facility personnel from original containers to a dispensing cup before administration. Seal cosmetics in a

plastic bag for two weeks at room temperature or hotter before future use.

### **Furniture and Living Environment**

Use the facility-approved cleaning and disinfection products according to the manufacturer's directions.

- ▲ All washable items should be cleaned prior to disinfection.
- ▲ **While certain insecticides are registered for in-home and facility use, insecticides and fumigation are not necessary or recommended for control of mites in the environment.**
- ▲ Mattresses, pillow covers, curtains, bedside equipment, non-carpeted floors, and other such materials touched by the scabies patient should be cleaned after the scabicide has been removed from the patient.
- ▲ Multiple patient use items, such as walking or transfer belts, wheelchairs, and blood pressure cuffs must be disinfected after scabicide removal if they have been used by the symptomatic case. It is advisable that these materials are individually assigned or disinfected after each patient diagnosed with scabies has used the equipment.
- ▲ Vacuum carpeted floors and upholstered furniture if it is in the case's room or any common area where the scabies case has visited. During scabicide treatment, any furniture that is to be used by the patient should be covered with a sheet.
- ▲ Vacuum carpeted floors and upholstered furniture in patient's room, or any common area the patient has visited. During scabicide treatment, any furniture that is to be used by the patient should be covered with a sheet. Discard vacuum bag or empty contents into a receptacle at task completion.
- ▲ Upholstered furniture should be vacuumed and covered in plastic for 7 days.