

*"To improve the health of our communities by identifying sustainable solutions to community health issues, developing partnerships for implementation of strategies, and demonstrating our success through measurement of outcomes."*

## HEALTH ALERT NETWORK HEALTH DISTRICT 4

### SCABIES ADVISORY FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

Central District Health Department Urges Providers to Watch  
for Scabies

February 3, 2012

Central District Health Department (CDHD) recommends health care providers consider scabies infestations if patients complain of an itchy rash. CDHD has noted an increase in individual and institutional scabies reports during the last two months.

#### **Diagnosis**

Scabies often manifests with intense itching and a pimple-like (papular) rash. The mites usually burrow in places with skin folds, such as the hands, wrists, elbows, breasts, armpits, waist, or groin. A skin scraping with microscopic examination may confirm the diagnosis but most patients are diagnosed based on the distribution and appearance of the rash. When a person is infested with scabies mites the first time, symptoms will typically appear between 2-6 weeks.

#### **Treatment**

Recommended treatment is by prescription only. No over-the-counter products are approved to treat human scabies. A scabicide cream or lotion applied at bedtime and left on the body overnight is usually effective. Permethrin cream (5%) is commonly used but other options are available. A list of treatments can be found at:

[http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/scabies/health\\_professionals/meds.html](http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/scabies/health_professionals/meds.html)

#### **Prevention**

Since infested patients may spread mites for up to 6 weeks before becoming symptomatic, all close contacts, including sex partners and household members, should be treated simultaneously to prevent re-infestation. Prophylactic treatment is recommended for contacts with more than 5 minutes of skin-to-skin contact. Personal items must be decontaminated. Clothing, bedding, and towels must be washed in hot water then dried on high heat.

For additional information contact Communicable Disease Control at 327-8625.

*Serving Valley, Elmore, Boise, and Ada Counties*

#### **Ada / Boise County Office**

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Family Planning: 327-7400  
Immunizations: 327-7450  
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#### **Elmore County Office**

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Mountain Home, ID 83647  
Enviro. Health: 587-9225  
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#### **Valley County Office**

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