Te Whatu Ora
Health New Zealand
Waitaha Canterbury

PERMETHRIN (for scabies)

per-meth-rin

What does it do?

Permethrin is used to treat scabies.

Before you start

- Tell your health professional if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding.

How should you use it?

Everyone in the same household should be treated on the same day, even if they do not have a rash or itch.

Apply before bed when the skin is cool and dry. Apply over the whole body, including the ears, scalp, hair, neck, and face, and especially between your toes and fingers, and under the nails. You can use a soft brush to get under your nails. Keep it out of your eyes, nose, and mouth.

Leave it on overnight (at least 8 hours) as directed, then wash off in the morning. If you wash your hands during this time, make sure to reapply.

Repeat the whole treatment after 7 days to make sure the infection does not come back.

You can go back to work or school 24 hours after the first treatment.

What if you forget a dose?

If you forget to reapply after 7 days, reapply it as soon as you remember.

Can you take other medicines?

Tell your pharmacist or doctor about all medicines or treatments that you may be taking, including vitamins, herbal products or recreational drugs.

What side effects might you notice?

Side Effects	Recommended action
Red, itchy or stinging skin	Tell your health professional if troublesome

If you notice any other effects, discuss them with your doctor or pharmacist.

Other information:

- For more information see healthinfo.org.nz - Getting rid of scabies.
- Clean all fabric items and footwear you have worn or touched in the last 4 days, such as sheets, towels, clothes and soft toys.
- The rash and itch from the scabies should improve in a few days but the itch may take up to 6 weeks. Your health professional may recommend another treatment to help with the itch. If you still have an itch after 6 weeks or it comes back, go back to your health professional.