

Sample Collection for Scabies

Health Professional Guideline

Diagnosis of a scabies infestation is usually made clinically, based upon the customary appearance and distribution of the rash and the presence of burrows.

Laboratory diagnosis is not usually necessary. Microscopy of burrow contents or scrapings from the hands of patients with crusted scabies may reveal mites, eggs or faeces. Laboratory diagnosis may be useful for scabies in residential care or in cases where the diagnosis is uncertain. However, even experienced dermatologists only recover a mite or egg in about 50% of scabies cases

The sample can be collected by 2 methods:

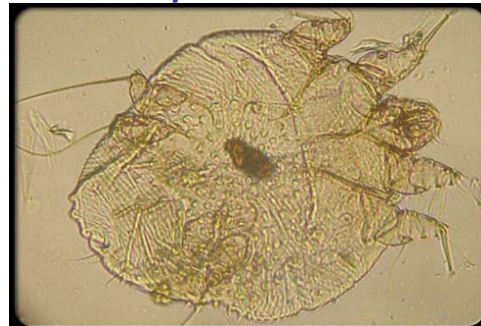
1. Carefully remove the mite from the end of its burrow using the tip of a needle
2. Place a drop of oil on to a scalpel blade and allow some of the oil to cover the papule. Scrape the papule vigorously six or seven times to remove the top; then transfer the blade and scraped material; which should contain some flecks of blood in the oil, into a urine pottle.
3. Label the sample with the patients full name and date of birth and send to the laboratory with the request form

A person can still be infested even if mites, eggs, or faecal matter cannot be found; fewer than 10-15 mites may be present on an infested person who is otherwise healthy.

Rash with burrows



***Sarcoptes scabiei* mite**



For further details: <http://www.bpac.org.nz/magazine/2009/february/scabies.asp>
