

ONLY a physician, nurse or other healthcare professional who has been trained to perform the procedure should do skin scrapings. If no one is available in your facility a dermatologist may need to be consulted.

1. Obtain the following equipment

- Gloves and gowns
- Slides and cover slips
- Magnifying lens and light source such as goose-neck lamps
- Mineral oil and dropper*
- Applicator sticks*
- #15 surgical blade*
- Sharps container
- Compound microscope (if available)
- *these items are single use and should not be used on multiple persons

2. Procedure

1. Observe client's skin with a magnifying lens and look for lesions suggestive of scabies infestation. The shoulders, back, abdomen, hands, wrists, elbows, buttocks, axillae, knees, thighs and breasts are common sites for burrows.
2. Using a hand held magnifying lens and a strong light, look for new burrows or papules. If the burrow or papule is very fresh, a tiny speck (mite) may be visualized at either end of the burrow or in the papule. The mite will not be found in excoriated, scabbed or infected skin lesions. Preserved, unscratched papules may sometimes be found in a grouping of scratched papules.
3. Select an unexcoriated burrow or papule.
4. Prepare slide by dipping an applicator stick into mineral oil and transferring 2-3 drops to the center of the clean slide.
5. Dip applicator stick into the mineral oil and transfer a drop of oil to the lesion selected for scraping and spread the oil evenly over the intended scraping site.
6. Hold the skin taut with one hand and hold the surgical blade at a 90° angle.
7. Apply light pressure and scrape the lesion making several movements across the lesion. Increase the pressure slightly while scraping. A small amount of blood may be visible; however, there should be no frank bleeding.
8. Transfer skin scrapings to the prepared slide. Scrape several sites if available and transfer to the same slide. Place a cover slip over the scrapings.

9. Examine the entire slide preparation under low power magnification for evidence of mites, eggs or fecal pellets. If a compound microscope is not available at the facility, transport slides to a clinical laboratory (Cadham Lab).