Ivermectin Guidance

This guidance is to be used when administering prescribed Ivermectin oral tablets.

Purpose and Scope

This guidance supports care home staff to safely administer prescribed Ivermectin oral tablets. It does not replace clinical assessment, prescribing advice, or outbreak/contact management advice.

Treatment Principles

- Treat confirmed cases immediately once diagnosed.
- **Do not delay treatment for confirmed cases while whole home treatment (WHT) arrangements are being made**.
- In outbreak situations, the date for WHT should be agreed with the IPC Team. Organising WHT may take several days to coordinate, particularly where prescriptions need to be obtained for residents and staff.
- When WHT is advised, all identified residents and staff should commence treatment as close to the same time as possible, ideally within a 24-hour period, to reduce the risk of reinfestation.
- **Staff who are off duty during WHT are still required to complete their first dose of treatment as part of the coordinated treatment programme**.
- Any staff member who has not received their first dose of treatment must not return to work until the first dose of treatment has been completed and at least 24 hours have passed since administration.

Ivermectin Treatment for Scabies

Ivermectin is prescribed for confirmed cases of scabies in care home settings.

- Ivermectin tablets contain **3 mg** of active ingredient per tablet.
- The prescribed dose is based on body weight at **200 micrograms (mcg) per kilogram (kg) of body weight (0.2 mg/kg)**. Refer to the dosage table below for guidance.
- Treatment consists of **two doses**:
  - **First dose:** Day 1
  - **Second dose:** 7 days later

Administration Instructions

- Tablets should be swallowed whole with water.
- Ivermectin should be taken **on an empty stomach**.
- No food should be consumed for **2 hours before and 2 hours after administration**.

Why Is a Second Dose Needed?

- Ivermectin kills live scabies mites but **does not kill mite eggs**.
- A second dose is therefore required **7 days after the first dose** to kill any newly hatched mites and maximise treatment effectiveness.

When Might Ivermectin Be Used Instead of Permethrin?

Ivermectin may be prescribed instead of topical permethrin when:

- A resident is a confirmed case living in a care home setting.
- A resident has **broken, damaged, or extensively affected skin**.
- Topical treatment would be difficult to apply effectively, for example in residents with:
  - Dementia
  - Learning disabilities
  - Other conditions that make full-body application challenging

Important Considerations

Ivermectin may not be suitable for all residents or staff, including those who:

- Are pregnant or breastfeeding.
- Have significant liver disease.
- Weigh less than **15 kg**.

Always follow the prescriber's instructions. If there is any uncertainty regarding suitability, dosing, or administration, seek advice from the prescribing clinician or pharmacist before treatment is given.

Before you start

Before administering Ivermectin, ensure environmental cleaning and laundry requirements associated with scabies treatment have been completed in accordance with local IPC guidance wherever possible

The prescribed dosage should always be checked for accuracy before any medication is administered.

- Check all prescriptions on receipt and before administration to ensure that the prescribed dose is appropriate for the resident's recorded body weight.
- Ensure you only administer the amount prescribed for that resident.
- Be aware that prescriptions may include two treatment doses, with the second dose due 7 days later.
- Check for any known allergy or hypersensitivity to Ivermectin or its ingredients.
- If unsure, **DO NOT ADMINISTER**. Contact the prescriber, GP or IPC Team for advice.

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Dosing Information

Ivermectin tablets contain 3 mg each. The prescribed dose is based on body weight. The usual dose is 200 micrograms (mcg) per kilogram (kg) of body weight (0.2 mg/kg).

The table below is provided for guidance only and does not replace the prescribed dose, professional clinical judgement, or prescribing advice. Always follow the prescription issued for the resident. If you are unsure about a dose, or believe it may be incorrect, contact the prescriber or pharmacist for advice before administering the medication.

Body weight (kg)	Ivermectin dose	Number of 3mg tablets
15-24kg	3mg	1 tablet
25-35kg	6mg	2 tablets
36-50kg	9mg	3 tablets
51-65kg	12mg	4 tablets
66-79kg	16mg	5 tablets

Administration

- Confirm the correct resident, prescribed dose, and treatment date before administration.
- Ensure the resident has not eaten for at least 2 hours before treatment.
- Administer Ivermectin exactly as prescribed.
- Tablets should be swallowed whole with water.
- No food should be consumed for 2 hours after administration.
- Record administration in accordance with local medicines management procedures.
- Ensure arrangements are in place for the second dose to be administered 7 days later

Infection Prevention and Control Considerations

- Perform hand hygiene before and after resident contact.
- Wear disposable gloves and apron when providing hands-on personal care.
- Consider long-sleeved disposable gowns or oversleeves when extensive skin-to-skin contact may occur, particularly during personal care activities in the first 24 hours following treatment.

Important Safety Information

- Do not administer more than the prescribed dose.
- Only administer the number of tablets prescribed.
- If you are unsure how much to administer, seek advice before giving medication.
- If too much or too little Ivermectin is given, seek medical advice immediately and report the medication error in accordance with local policy.
- Observe residents for adverse effects following administration.

Common side effects may include:

- Dizziness
- Headache
- Nausea
- Diarrhoea
- Abdominal pain
- Skin reactions

Report and document any adverse reactions according to local medicines management procedures.

National Guidance and useful links

- UKHSA guidelines for the management of scabies cases and outbreaks in communal residential settings - GOV.UK
- Scabies | Health topics A to Z | CKS | NICE
- Scabies
- Scenario: Management of scabies | Management | Scabies | CKS | NICE
- Ivermectin | Prescribing information | Scabies | CKS | NICE

Contact Cumberland IPC team for any additional advice/support:
IPC@cumberland.gov.uk