

# Strong Skin Story

A resource for  
community  
members

## Why is strong skin so important?

Skin is all over our body, so we have to keep it safe!

It protects our body and our blood.

If your skin is sick, other parts of your body can get sick too.

## Keeping my family's skin strong

Do more of this

Wash towels and belongings and then dry them in the sun.

Rub dry skin with moisturising cream.

If skin is sick, go to the clinic and talk to the healthcare worker, doctor or nurse.

Cover skin sores from dirt or scratching.

Use bush medicines.

## Germs that make your skin sick

Strep germ

Scabies mite

Staph germ

Fungus

These germs are so tiny you can't see them, but they are very harmful.

## Skin Sores

Skin sores happen when the germs get into the skin through cuts and bites, as well as from scabies, head lice or tinea.

This is very common in children and looks like:

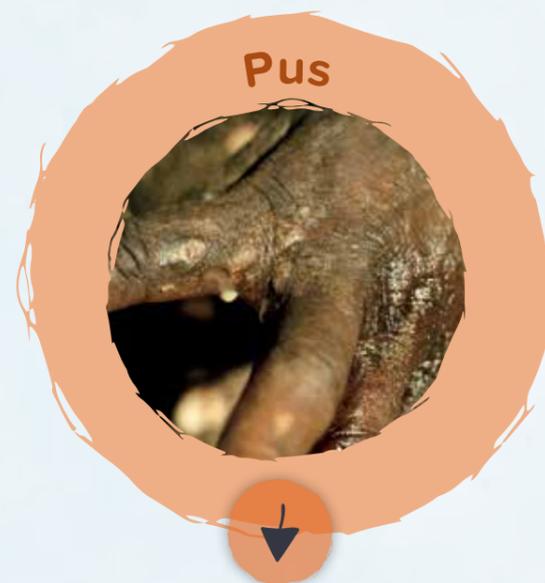
Yellow-brown scabbed sores

Sores with pus

or

## When skin sores look like this

It is important to take medicine straight away!

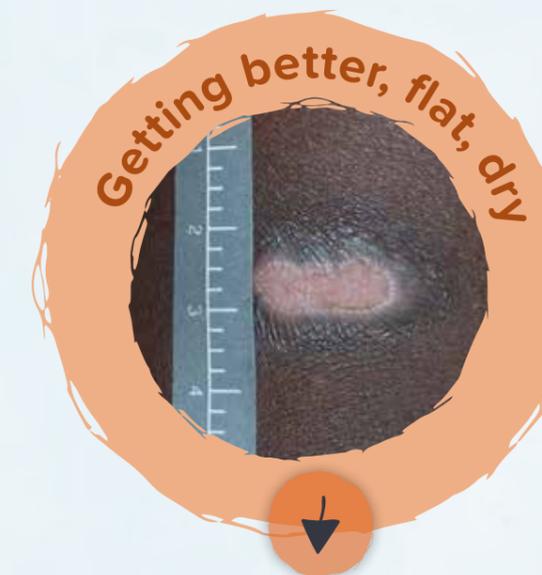


When skin sores have pus, you have to take medicine to kill the germs.



When skin sores have a scab, you have to take medicine to kill the germs.

## When skin sores look like this



When skin sores are getting better they look flat and dry.

This means the germs are dead and skin sores are healing, so medicine is no longer needed.

## Scabies

You get scabies when the scabies mite goes under your skin and lays eggs.



You can get scabies from other people who have scabies if you touch their skin, their belongings, or the bed they sleep on.



## What do I do if I get Scabies?

Use topical permethrin 5% cream all over your body

**Put on straight away & again in one week's time**

Rub cream on from head to foot after you have a shower.

No cream on the eyes or mouth.

Rub more cream on your hands again after you wash them.

Leave cream on overnight and then wash off in the morning.

## What do I do if I get Scabies?



Or there is the tablet medicine that you can take now and again in one week's time.

Everyone in the house also needs to **use the cream or the tablet medicine too**, but just once for the mob in the house who don't have scabies.

## Infected Scabies

Scabies can sometimes get infected with the Strep and Staph germs.



## Medicines to kill germs

The clinic should give you a choice. You choose what is best for you and your family. The choices are:

A



Oral Septrin  
(drink medicine)



 Morning &  Night for 3 days

B



Intramuscular  
Benzathine  
penicillin G  
(BPG)



A needle in the thigh straight away

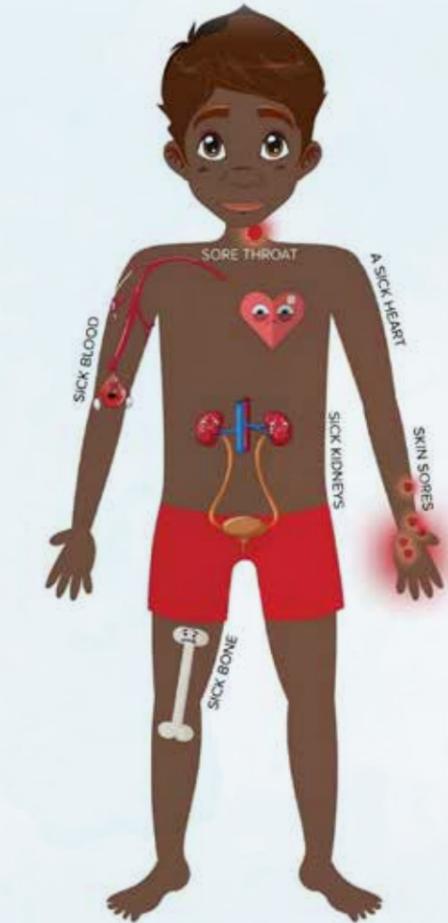
## Without medicine skin sores can hurt more

Sepsis  
(sick blood)

Bone  
& Joint  
Pain

Kidney  
Disease

Rheumatic  
Heart  
Disease



## Environmental Health is also important

Strong skin needs healthy communities.

Eating good tucker.

Working together to clean up rubbish in your community.

Keeping dogs outside homes.

Wash hands with soap.

Shower everyday with soap.

Have a yarn with the environmental health team about ways to keep your community healthy!

Let's work together for Strong Skin

## Acknowledgements

The See, Treat, Prevent Skin Sores and Scabies (SToP) Trial was a research partnership project between Telethon Kids Institute, Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services, WA Country Health Services and Nirrumbuk Environmental Health Services. The project involved nine remote WA Kimberley Aboriginal communities from 2017 to 2023, and aimed to improve the awareness, detection, and treatment of skin infections in the Kimberley to prevent the development of complex downstream diseases such as rheumatic heart disease, sepsis, and chronic kidney disease. A key feature of the SToP Trial was involvement of community voices in the research, and the co-design of health promotion resources about healthy skin.

Following extensive consultation during the early stages of the SToP Trial, this resource has been developed. It was adapted from Keeping Skin Healthy: A Handbook for Community Care Workers, which was developed by our team in 2018 in partnership with Pilbara communities. Community members from SToP Trial communities have also worked with the trial team to co-develop tailored versions of this book which include local language and artwork. We encourage other users to consider similarly tailoring the delivery of the contained messages to suit their local context.

Telethon Kids Institute and the SToP Trial team acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the traditional custodians of the land and waters of Australia and are thankful for their ongoing wisdom and guidance.

**Artwork:** Luke Riches (Ardyaloon community) painted *Gathering Circles* (2020; cover art) to tell the SToP Trial story. The circles represent the nine communities participating in the SToP Trial. In Riches' words "The circles vary in colour and composition, just as the communities hold their own unique identities. The backdrop of pindan orange and coastal blues convey the land and sea setting that makes the Kimberley so beautiful. The dot painted trails show a connection between the communities, of both foot trails and song lines that unite the people".

**Citation:** McRae T, Pigram A, Ford A, Mullane M, Thomas H, Coffin J, Walker R, Carapetis J, Bowen AC. *Strong Skin Story*, Telethon Kids Institute, Perth, 2023

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