

Threadworm

Description: Threadworm also known as pinworm, are parasitic worms that infect the large intestine. The worms are white and look like small pieces of thread about one centimetre long and often go unnoticed by people who have them.



Symptoms:

Threadworms don't always cause symptoms but the following may be experienced:

- Itchiness around the anus (bottom) or vagina
- Evidence may be noticed of worms, around the anus area or in the child's faeces

Severe or persistent threadworm infections can cause:

- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss
- Skin infection around the anus
- Difficulty getting to sleep or staying asleep as the worms lay their eggs at night
- Bedwetting

How is it spread?

- Scratching the anus or vagina, or wiping them after going to the toilet, can cause the eggs to stick to fingertips or under fingernails
- If you don't wash your hands, the eggs can be transferred to the mouth or onto food or objects such as toys and kitchen utensils
- If someone else touches a contaminated object, or eats contaminated food and then touches their mouth, they'll become infected

How to treat threadworm

To treat threadworms successfully, all household members should be treated, even if they don't have any symptoms. This is because the risk of infection is very high. The main medication to treat threadworms is available from our local pharmacy without a prescription.

How long is it infectious?

Threadworm will continue to be transmitted from person to person or person to surfaces for as long as the infected persons remain untreated.

How long should my child stay home from school?

There is no need for a child to stay away from school. However, please inform class staff so that steps can be taken to prevent the spread of infection.