

Attention Parents:

Please be advised that we have had a reported case of **Pinworms** in your child's class. Your child may have been exposed.

For your reference, we are sending home this information sheet. All information is for educational purposes only. For specific medical advice, diagnosis and treatment consult your physician.

Pinworms Fact Sheet

Pinworms are small white worms about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch long and as thin as a thread. They can sometimes be seen in and around the child's bowel movements; they infect only humans. These worms live in the large intestine. The adult female worm crawls out of the rectal opening at night and lays her eggs on the skin around the anus. This causes itching and scratching. The worms can also move to the vagina of a female child and cause itching. Best time to find worms is at night or after bathing.

How the infection is spread

When the child scratches, tiny eggs can be picked up on the fingers and then transferred to his mouth. This causes the infection to start over again in the intestine. Eggs can be found on toilet seats, in house dust, bed linens, and play areas in or outside the home. Individuals coming in contact with the eggs can contract the infection.

How to treat the infection

- Your doctor will prescribe a special medicine to treat pinworm infection.
- Read the label on the bottle of medicine and give it as directed by your doctor. Usually the medicine is given as a one-time dose. Sometimes the doctor will order the medicine to be repeated in 2 to 3 weeks, especially if symptoms continue.
- Your doctor may also treat other family members with medicine.
- If other family members are being treated, they should all be given the medicine at the same time.
- Store medicine out of the reach of children.

How to prevent re-infection

The following things should be done until the child and family members are free of infection. Start when the medicine is first given and continue for about 1 week. Continue to practice good hand-washing and good housekeeping even after the pinworms are gone.

- **HAND WASHING IS VERY IMPORTANT.** Have the child and all family members wash their hands in the morning. Before meals, and after using the toilet. This is a good habit all the time.
- Keep the child's fingernails cut as short as possible.
- Tie mittens or socks over the child's hands at night. This will keep him from scratching and getting pinworm eggs under his fingernails.