

Ask Your Pharmacist

Pinworm Infection: What You Should Know

(NAPS)—The pinworm annually infects 40 million people, about 13 percent of Americans. It's a highly contagious, intestinal worm that measures about ¼"-½" long and exists year-round, especially in warm, moist climates. According to the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), pinworm infestation is twice as common as head lice. Preschoolers and school-age children have the highest rates of infection.

Symptoms of Pinworms

Parents should suspect that their children are infected if they frequently scratch their perianal area, are uncomfortable sitting, have difficulty sleeping, act restless and maybe even experience loss of appetite.

How Do You Get Pinworms?

Touching or scratching the affected area transfers pinworm eggs to the host's fingers, which can spread them practically anywhere.

Confirming Infection

Pinworms can frequently be seen in stool or on the skin around the anus. If pinworms are suspected but no worms are seen, transparent adhesive tape or a pinworm paddle (supplied by your health care provider) can be applied to the anal region. The eggs or worms adhere to the sticky side of the tape or the paddle. Bring the tape samples to your doctor, who will have them examined to determine if pinworms are present. The best time to take the samples is one to two hours before the patient arises and uses the bathroom or bathes.

Fully Treatable

Pinworm infection is fully treatable. The best way to eliminate pinworms is to use an over-the-counter pyrantel pamoate-based medication, such as Reese's Pinworm liquid or caplets, which are highly effective at eliminating pinworms—usually



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with just one dose. Many major drug chains as well as independent pharmacies carry Reese's. Because pinworms are contagious, all family members need to be treated at the same time. Several children can be easily treated with a single package, because dosages are based on each individual's weight.

Preventing Reinfestation

Because pinworm eggs may still be present in the house after your family's initial treatment, your family doctor must be consulted to determine the next course of action for complete elimination of pinworms and their eggs. Do not repeat treatment unless directed by a doctor.

These simple measures can help prevent reinfestation:

- Bathe or shower daily.
- Frequently wash and change underwear, sleepwear, toys and bedding.
- Wash hands regularly, especially after using the bathroom and before eating.
- Discourage nail biting.
- Discourage touching or scratching bare anal areas.
- Keep your home clean.

For more information, go to www.ReesePharmaceutical.com/pinworm.html or call (800) 321-7178.

Healthy Ideas

Pinworm infection in children is fully treatable. The best way, experts say, is with an over-the-counter pyrantel pamoate-based medication, such as Reese's Pinworm Treatments. Learn more at www.ReesePharmaceutical.com/pinworm.html or call (800) 321-7178.

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