

Pinworm Notification

On _____ a child in this childcare center was diagnosed with pinworm.

What is it? Pinworms are tiny parasitic worms that live in the digestive tract. The worms live in the upper end of the digestive tract and travel to the outside of the anus to lay their eggs. The eggs are usually laid at night. When the child scratches the anal area, then later sucks their thumb, the eggs are passed back into the digestive tract and the cycle starts over again. The eggs are very sticky and can survive outside a human source for up to two weeks. Pinworms can be spread as long as either eggs or worms are present. The child should not attend day care until 24 hours after the first treatment.

What to watch for?

- Anal itching, especially at night.
- Sleeplessness, irritability, and anal irritation due to scratching.
- Worms present in child's bowel movements.

How to prevent it?

- **Good hand washing** after using the toilet and before eating.

What can we do at home?

- Ask your pharmacist for a nonprescription medication for pinworms.
- Treat everyone in the house between ages two and ten.
- Clean and disinfect bathroom surfaces and vacuum carpeted areas.
- Cut fingernails short and discourage children from scratching the anal area.

When do we call a doctor?

- With the first infection it is important that a doctor confirm the diagnosis.
- If the pinworm medication causes side effects such as vomiting or pain.
- If you continue to see worms at night while using nonprescription medicines.
- When a person with a pinworm infection develops a fever, abdominal pain, pain when urinating, or loss of appetite.