

PINWORMS (Enterobiasis)

IMMUNIZATION: None

INCUBATION PERIOD: 2 weeks to 2 months

SYMPTOMS: Intense rectal itching (primary symptom), may also include general irritability, restlessness, poor sleep, bed-wetting, perianal dermatitis and excoriation secondary to itching.

PERIOD OF COMMUNICABILITY:

As long as female worms are discharging eggs on perianal skin. Eggs remain infective in an indoor environment for about 2 weeks.

MODE OF TRANSMISSION:

Ingestion of eggs caused by scratching of rectal area and transferring eggs to mouth by putting fingers in the mouth. Those in close contact to infected individual may be exposed to contaminated objects. Transmission may also occur through contact with soiled clothing or bed linens.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE:

Following appropriate treatment, child does not need to be excluded.

CONTACTS/FOLLOW-UP:

Other children observed by parents or child care personnel who have rectal itching should be checked for pinworms and treated if infection is present. Personnel should be made aware of the means of transmission and the potential for infection. Good hygiene among the children and personnel with washing of hands, bedclothes and toys should be emphasized. Parents should be advised that pinworm infections are common and often unavoidable in any group setting. They should be educated regarding the mode of transmission, symptoms, means of diagnosis and treatment options. Parents should be reassured that the diagnosis of pinworms in their child or in another child is not necessarily an indication of poor hygienic conditions. Susceptibility is universal.