

## Pinworms

- 1.) **Definition:** Pinworms are ½ inch, threadlike worms that infect the anal area and large intestine. Over 10% of children have them. They do not cause any serious health problems, but they can cause considerable itching and irritation of the anal area. Your children can get pinworms no matter how carefully you keep them clean.
- 2.) **Medicine:** Treatment of pinworms is almost always successful with a single dose of Vermox, a prescription medicine to be taken by mouth. Please call during regular hours for the prescription. **Pinworms are not an emergency.**
- 3.) **Treatment of other family members:** Children are usually infected by people outside the family. If any of your child's friends have similar symptoms be sure to tell their parents. If anyone else in your family has symptoms they need to be treated. If the pinworms come back after treatment, everyone in the family including the parents needs to be treated. Vermox should not be taken if pregnant, and should be used cautiously under 2 years of age.
- 4.) **Prevention:** Infection is caused by swallowing pinworm eggs. The adult pinworm comes outside the anus at night and deposits hundreds of eggs on the skin. The following personal hygiene measures can help to cut down on the chances of re-infection of your child or new infections of other people.
  - a.) Scrub hands thoroughly before each meal and after each use of the toilet. Also, keep fingernails but short because they can collect eggs.
  - b.) Each night, have the child wear tight shorts or panties under his/her pajamas.
  - c.) Each morning, give the child a shower, with a careful washing of the anal area. Remove the shorts in the bathtub. Afterwards, put on clean shorts.
  - d.) Each morning, wash the bed sheets and the child's shorts. Carefully remove and fold the sheets, trying not to scatter the eggs. Machine washing will kill any eggs present in the sheets and shorts.
  - e.) Vacuum or wet-mop the child's entire room because the eggs on the floor are infectious for three weeks.
  - f.) These steps should be carried out daily for three days following the medicine.