

Information regarding Pinworms/Threadworms (Gyouchu; ぎょう虫)

Pinworms, caused by *Enterobius vermicularis*, are one of the most common parasitic infections. Close proximity conditions, such as in classrooms and day-care centres, favour transmission.

The main symptom of pinworm is intense itching around the anus. This itching is particularly intense at night, when the female worms are active laying their eggs. However, in young children who have difficulty verbalizing this discomfort, general irritability, restlessness, poor sleep, bed-wetting, distractibility, and short attention span arouse suspicion of infection.

Normal treatment is by taking Mebendazole, it does not kill the eggs produced by threadworms, so strict hygiene measures should still be followed for two weeks after treatment. Since pinworms are easily transmitted, all household members need to be treated, even if only one person has been infected. If the condition persists after using medication, see your GP who is likely to recommend that you begin a second course of medication.

To prevent reinfection, please wash all clothes and bed linen, and vacuum house regularly and thoroughly. Please make sure children frequently wash their hands with soap, especially after going to the toilet and before eating. Keeping the child's fingernails short to minimize the chance of collecting eggs under the nails, and daily showering rather than bathing is also recommended. If you have smaller children at home, please change diapers as soon as soiled, and dressing them in one-piece pant outfits is helpful.

We will do our best to minimise the possibility of cross-infection and we would advise that you check the following website for up-to-date information concerning this illness:
<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/threadworms/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

If you have trouble accessing these websites or would like any further information please contact the School Nurses:

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Best regards
The British School in Tokyo
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