

# FactSheet

Para Su Información

## Pinworm

### What is pinworm?

Pinworm is an illness caused by a parasitic intestinal worm. The adult female worms lay eggs in the anal area. The disease is spread when the infected child scratches the anal area and then touches food or objects that other children put into their mouths. The most common symptom is itchiness around the anus. Symptoms may recur every 6 to 8 weeks, (which is the natural life cycle of the parasite). However, many children with this infection have no symptoms at all.

### How is pinworm spread?

Poor hygiene increases the risk of infection with pinworm.

### How can pinworm be prevented?

- Strict attention to hand washing in children and adults is essential to limit the spread of this illness.
- Hands should be washed thoroughly with warm soapy water, after using the toilet or after assisting a child with toilet use.
- Hands should be washed before eating, before preparing food and before feeding a child.
- Hand washing should include cleaning under the fingernails.
- Frequent bathing and changing of undergarments and bed linens can also reduce the spread of infection.

### What do I do if my child has pinworm?

If you think that your child may have pinworm, contact your doctor for diagnosis and treatment. Once the diagnosis of pinworm is made, a child needs to be excluded from school or child care until

treatment with medication specific for pinworms has begun. Frequently, household contacts of infected children will also require treatment.

### Where can I get more information?

Contact your doctor or the Southern Nevada Health District, Office of Epidemiology at (702) 759-1300.



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