

EXPOSURE NOTICE* - PINWORMS

Date: _____

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Your child may have been exposed to PINWORMS.

General information:

Pinworm infection is caused by a thin, small, white roundworm (about the length of a staple) They live in the lower digestive tract, and may be seen at night near the rectal opening when the female pinworm comes outside of the body to lay her eggs. Although they can be uncomfortable, pinworms rarely cause serious health complications.

What are the symptoms?

- Itching or scratching the anal area, especially at night.
- Difficulty sleeping or restlessness.

If your child has one or more symptoms above, check for pinworms by looking at the anal area after he/she has gone to bed. In the dark, look at the anal area with a flashlight. If you see small, white objects, then this could be pinworms. You might also see the worms in the child's underwear or stool.

What do I need to do?

- Watch your child for signs and symptoms of the pinworms for the next several weeks.
- If your child develops symptoms or you find pinworms, please call your healthcare provider, inform the school, and keep your child home. *Please follow your health care provider's instructions for home care and to prevent the spread of disease to others.*

Please talk to your Family Service Worker if you do not have a regular healthcare provider or health insurance.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON PINWORMS

How is it spread?

Pinworms are easily spread person-to-person by the transfer of pinworm eggs from the anus to someone's mouth. This typically occurs by swallowing eggs that are on fingers, under fingernails, or on clothing or contaminated items (e.g. clothing, bedding, etc.). Because the eggs are very small, they can also become airborne (for instance while shaking out bedding) and then swallowed while breathing. Pinworms eggs can survive for 2-3 weeks on clothing, bedding or other objects. If one person has pinworms, it usually is recommended that all members of the household take medication, even if they do not have symptoms. Humans cannot get pinworms from pets.

How do I prevent this disease?

Practice good daily hygiene:

- Wash hands with soap and water after using the toilet, changing diapers, and before handling food.
- Bathe and change underwear daily.
- Keep fingernails clean and short.
- Don't bite/chew fingernails.
- Avoid scratching the skin in the perianal area.

When can someone with pinworm return to school/childcare?

Children with symptoms of pinworms may return to school once treated and verification is received from the healthcare provider.