

Things you should do at home

Treatment for threadworms can be obtained either over the counter at the chemist, or from the G.P.

Don't ignore it – Threadworms do not just go away!

Medicine kills the threadworms, but it does not kill the eggs. Eggs can live for up to 2 weeks outside the body.

There are things you can do to stop becoming infected again.

Do

- wash hands and scrub under fingernails – particularly before eating, after using the toilet or changing nappies
- encourage children to wash hands regularly
- bathe or shower every morning
- rinse toothbrushes before using them
- keep fingernails short
- wash sleepwear, sheets, towels and soft toys (at a hot temperature)
- disinfect kitchen and bathroom surfaces
- vacuum and dust with a damp cloth
- make sure children wear underwear at night – change it in the morning
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Don't

- do not shake clothing or bedding, to prevent eggs landing on other surfaces
- do not share towels or flannels
- do not bite nails or suck thumbs and fingers

If your child has threadworms there is no need to stay off school but they will need treatment.

How threadworms spread

Threadworms spread when their eggs are swallowed. They lay eggs around your bottom (anus), which make it itchy. The eggs get stuck on your fingers when you scratch. They can then pass on to anything you touch, including:

- clothes
- toys
- toothbrushes
- kitchen or bathroom surfaces
- bedding
- food
- pets

Eggs can pass to other people when they touch these surfaces and then touch their mouth. They take around 2 weeks to hatch. Children can get threadworms again after they have been treated for them if they get the eggs in their mouth. This is why it is important to encourage children to wash their hands regularly.