

**GASTROINTESTINAL TRACT INFECTIONS**  
**Threadworms (*Enterobius vermicularis*)**  
[\(CKS Threadworm\)](#)

**Threadworms is a condition that should be treated over the counter and is on the NHSE [list](#) of conditions for which OTC items should NOT routinely be prescribed in primary care.**

Threadworm or pinworm is a parasitic worm which infests the human gut and transmission occurs by the faeco-oral route when threadworm eggs are ingested.

Symptoms usually include intense perianal itching which is typically worse at night.

**Treatment:**

**Patients should be advised to implement hygiene measures and if treatment is required/appropriate, to purchase (or obtain via Pharmacy First) a suitable product over the counter (adults and children over 2 years).**

- Patient information leaflet: [Threadworms](#)
- Treat all household contacts at the same time.
- Treat with a single dose of mebendazole (unless contraindicated) — the dose may need to be repeated after 14 days if infection persists.
- Threadworms are self-limiting if the patient can avoid re-infection for 6 weeks.
- Advise rigorous hygiene measures for 2 weeks if treated with mebendazole or 6 weeks if using hygiene measures alone:
  - Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm water after using the toilet, changing nappies and before handling food.
  - Cut fingernails regularly, avoid biting nails and scratching around the anus.
  - Shower each morning, including the perianal area, to remove eggs from the skin.
  - Change bed linen and nightwear daily for several days after treatment.
  - Do not shake out items as this may distribute eggs around the room.
  - Washing/drying in a hot cycle will kill threadworm eggs.
  - Thoroughly dust and vacuum (including vacuuming mattresses) and clean the bathroom by 'damp-dusting' surfaces, washing the cloth frequently in hot water.

**Mebendazole is contraindicated in pregnancy and children <6 months, advise to observe hygiene measures for 6 weeks, aiming to break the re-infection cycle.**

Drug <sup>1</sup>	Dosage	Duration
Mebendazole	Adult and child ≥6 months: 100mg STAT	Single dose (may need to be repeated after 14 days)

<sup>1</sup> See [BNF](#) for appropriate use and dosing in specific populations, e.g., hepatic impairment or renal impairment, and in pregnancy and breastfeeding.

Version Control- Threadworms			
Version	Author(s)	Date	Changes
V2.1	Nichola Butcher, MO and Interface and Pharmacist	15/09/22	Added CKS link. Added more self-care information. Added information about repeating mebendazole dose after 14 days if required. Reinforced OTC product and not to prescribe in primary care.