

Rationale

Threadworms infections are minor conditions that can be treated without the need for a GP. Treatment can be brought over the counter.

Recommendations for clinicians

- Provide the patient with a 'non-prescription' sheet or a patient information leaflet to promote education about self-limiting conditions suitable for self-care when appropriate.
- Advise patients of safe and effective self-care measures:
 - 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. Scrub underneath fingernails
 - ❖ Cut fingernails regularly, avoid biting nails and scratching around the anus.
 - ❖ Bathe or shower each morning, washing the perianal area, to remove eggs from the skin. Do not share towels and flannels.
 - ❖ Ensure children wear nightwear and change bed clothes 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 warm 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. Disinfect bathroom and kitchen surfaces.
 - ❖ Infected people do not have to stay off school, nursery or work
- Advise patients to seek medical attention and consider treatment with a prescription in the following circumstances:
 - Re-infestation greater than six weeks following a cycle of treatment or frequent recurrences
 - Children under 2 years old

Example of products available to buy over the counter*

Mebendazole 100mg tablets and 10mmg/5ml suspension e.g. Ovex® – **not licensed for children under the age of 2 years, during pregnancy and breast feeding** (~£8.99 for 4 single doses (tablets) and £10.49 for 30mls suspension i.e.. 6 single 5ml doses (family packs) Single dose ~£3.25 for 1 tablet

NB The whole household should be treated.

For further information see Self-care forum <http://www.selfcareforum.org/>, NHS UK <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/>, Patient UK <https://patient.info/>

*Prices correct at time of writing and are subject to change

