

## **MS Word Export To Multiple PDF Files Software - Please purchase license.Worms**

Worms are many-celled animals unlike single-celled bacteria and protozoa which are the other main parasites of humans. Parasitic roundworms and tapeworms that cause disease in humans come from unsanitary living conditions and unhygienic preparation of food. They vary in size and shapes and in their life-cycles. The following types of roundworms are significant: Filariae - these cause elephantiasis, loa loa and river blindness. These worms are round, and can be transferred from person to person by a blood-sucking insect. Hookworms are very common in the tropics and sub tropics and live on blood, sugar, and oxygen. The adult hookworm lives in the duodenum. Here it feeds on blood and lays its eggs which then exit through the faeces. If they can live in warm soil, the eggs change to larvae and make contact with and move through human skin that they come in contact with. They suck from the intestinal wall, and can often cause anaemia. Ascaris can cause a large number of infestations and is one of the most common worms. The worms live in the intestine, the eggs are ingested from food which is contaminated with faeces. The larva hatches in the duodenum and travels to the bloodstream. After this it embeds itself in the lungs. Usually then it is coughed up the windpipe and swallowed, allowing it to travel back to the intestine. Threadworms are common in children everywhere and they also live in the intestine. The adult female worm exits around the anus and lays eggs which can cause irritation. If the infested person scratches around this area and inadvertently swallows more worm eggs, he or she will become reinfested and others may be infested.

Tapeworms that infest humans are usually not harmful unless they penetrate the intestinal wall and move to another part of the body. However, any worm problem can eventually lead to respiratory or cardiovascular complications. Most can be easily treated and cause no permanent harm.

### **What to look for...**

- Severe itching around the anus - occurring predominantly at night time, restlessness and difficulty sleeping.
- Loss of appetite and weight, irritability, diarrhoea, abdominal pain and vomiting are symptoms of small tapeworms;
- Diarrhoea, together with fever, pain, red eyes and swelling around the face area and around the eyes;
- Itching on the soles of your feet suggests hookworms;
- Nausea, diarrhoea, abdominal pain, dizziness, or changes in your appetite;
- Wheezing, coughing or other breathing problems, followed by vomiting, stomach pain, and bloating.
- Small red open patches that could itch, followed by coughing, wheezing, or bronchial problems; diarrhoea; abdominal pain; and flatulence.

### **Traditional Treatments**

Many types of infestation can be eradicated by having improved sanitation and by decreasing the risk of food and water being contaminated with human faeces. Hygiene is extremely important. Other worms may be avoided by cooking foods properly. The tapeworm is spread by uncooked beef or pork. You do not need to necessarily use very high temperatures as these larvae are killed at 55 degrees Celsius. Hookworms can be avoided by wearing shoes. Many filarial worms are avoided by not being bitten by insects.

There are many preparations available from your pharmacy that can prevent and/or kill all the worms that may infest humans.

### **Prevention**

- Make sure you and your family always wash their hands after going to the bathroom and definitely before eating.
- Keep fingernails short to reduce the chances of picking up eggs.
- Have all your pets treated for worms regularly.
- Thoroughly cook any beef or pork you eat or give your family.
- Wash all utensils that you use cutting up raw meats. Best to wash them straight away in hot, soapy water.

- Wear shoes when going in outside areas, if your local area is prone to certain types of worms.

### **When to Seek Further Professional Advice**

- You notice any of the symptoms listed above.