

# What You Need to Know About Worms



Always ensure that your children wear shoes when playing on the ground.



Always ensure that children's finger nails are kept short and clean.



Encourage children to adopt healthy behaviours such as using toilets at an early age.



Participate in the various child health campaigns aimed at improving your children's health.



***Ensure that your child receives worm medicine every 6 months.***

## ***Signs and symptoms***

- The child may lose weight and not grow well.
- The child may look pale due to lack of blood.
- The child may have a large stomach or abdomen.



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## Worms

Many children in Zambia suffer from worm infestation. There are a number of reasons why children get worms. Some of the reasons are:

- Most children like to pick food and other substances from the ground and put them in the mouth. These may contain eggs of worms which enter the child's body through the mouth and into the stomach.



- Children sometimes play in soil and may eat the soil as they play. Soil may contain worm eggs.



- Sometimes the vegetables and fruits that we feed children may contain worm eggs if they are not properly washed or cooked.



- Some worms are found in the soil and may get into the skin if the children walk bare feet.



## Problems caused by worms

Once the eggs are taken in by the child or enter the skin they will hatch and become worms. The worms then start feeding on the food the child eats and may cause the following problems:

- ❖ The child may stop growing well because the worms take away most of the food the child eats.
- ❖ The child may also have less blood.
- ❖ The child may experience diarrhea and stomach pains most of the times.
- ❖ School children may easily experience tiredness. This may affect their school performance.
- ❖ The child may become seriously ill, because when the worms become too many, they may block the intestines and the child cannot pass stool.
- ❖ Sometimes the child can vomit worms and they can block the throat. The child may fail to breath and may die.

## What parents can do

- Take all your children from 1 year to 5 years to the nearest health centre to receive worm medicines.
- For pre-school children, find out from the school what programmes they have for de-worming and ensure that your children are given the medicine for worms.



- The worm medicines will kill the worms and help your child grow strong and healthy.
- Always ensure that children wash hands before touching food and after using the toilet.

