

Deworming

FIT FOR SCHOOL



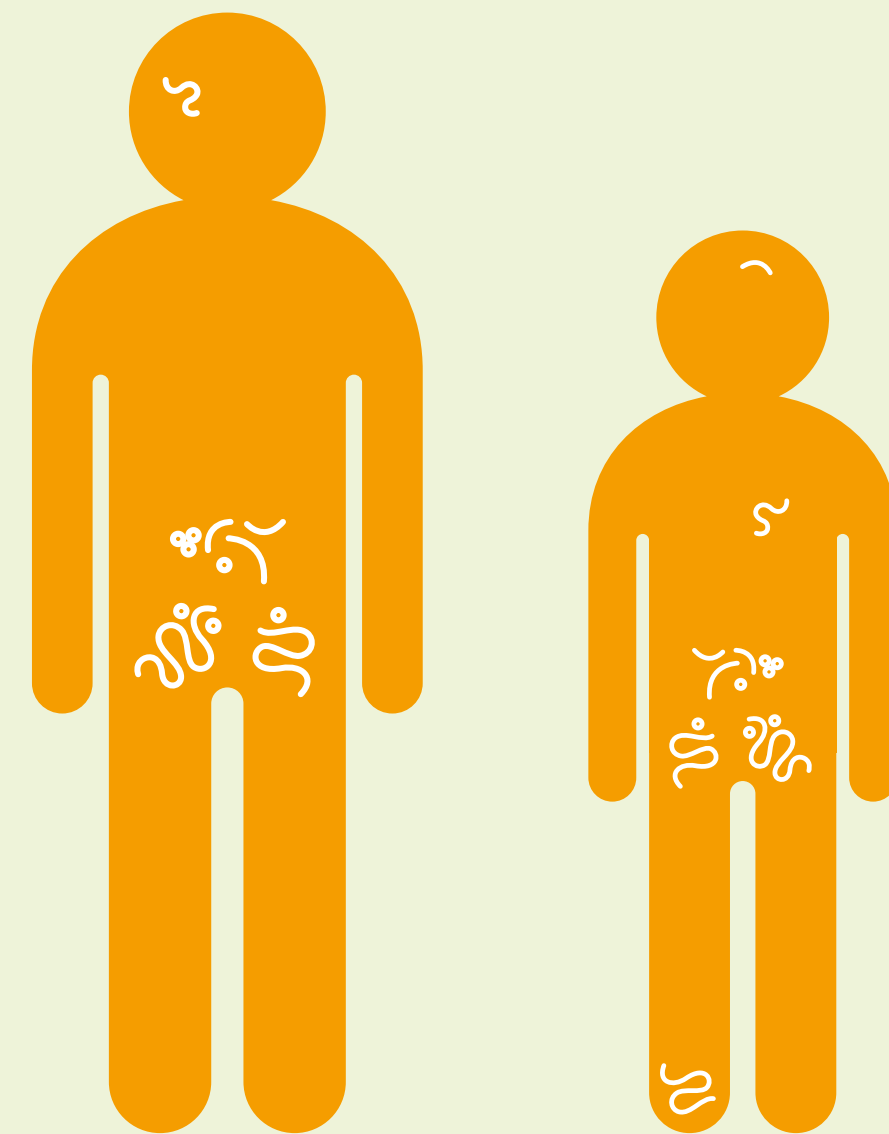
Intestinal worm infections are very common among school-age children in developing countries. Untreated worm infections can cause anemia and hinder mental development. Nowadays, worm infections can be controlled through deworming with safe, inexpensive, and highly effective drugs.



1. What are intestinal worms?

Intestinal worms are parasites that live inside the human intestines.

There are many kinds and they come in different sizes, but they all cause disease in humans.



The most common worms

→ Giant Roundworm



→ Whipworm



→ Hookworm

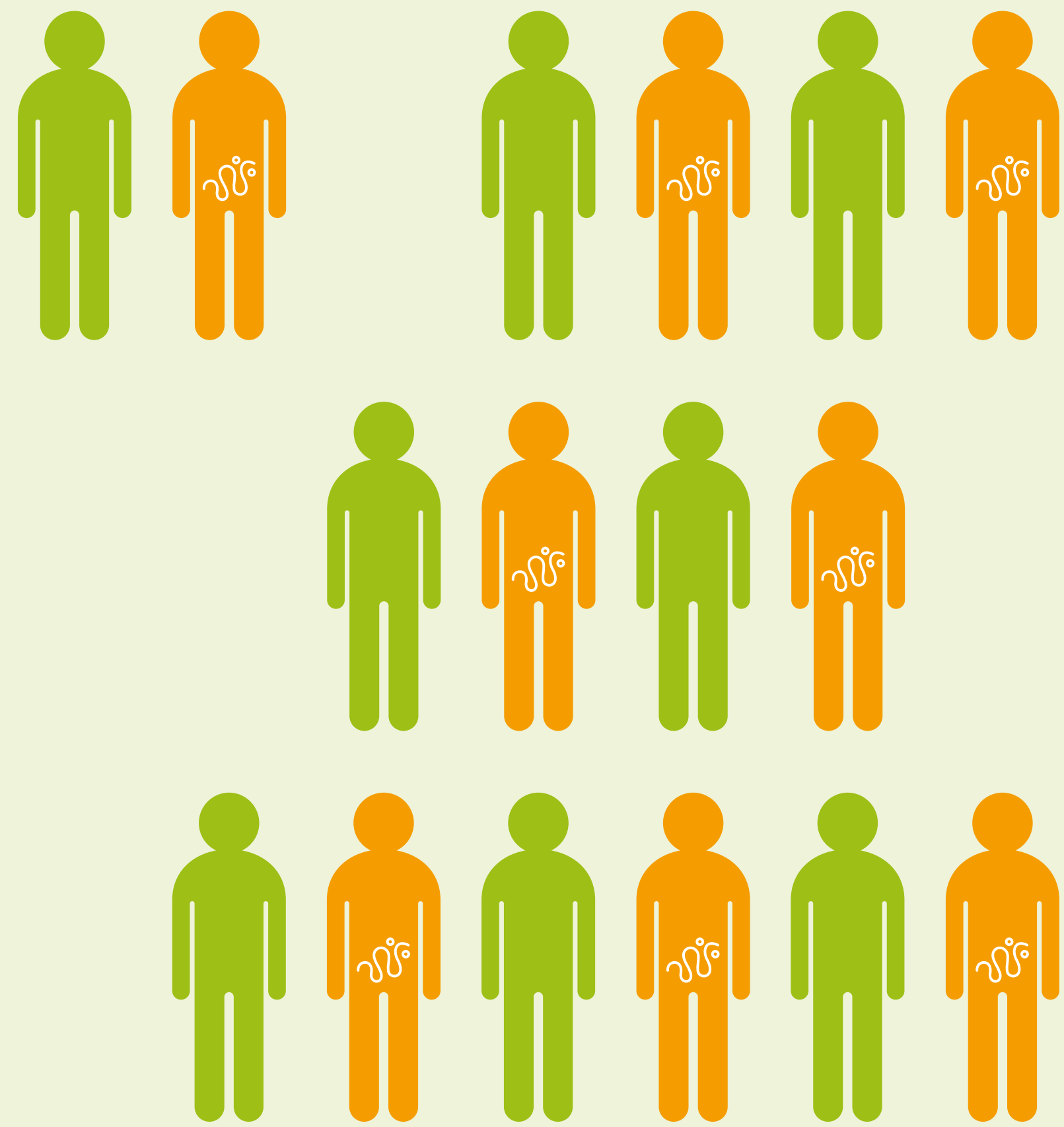


Have you ever seen worms in the stool?

2. What's wrong with having worms?

In the Philippines, one in every two schoolchildren is infected with worms.

Even children in the most exclusive schools in Manila have them. Worms are so widespread in the Philippines, that some even believe that it is normal or even beneficial for children to have worms. On the contrary!



Worms survive by stealing nutrients from the person they infect and cause various disorders.

In general, people with worms suffer from:

Lack of nutrients

Poor performance in school and work

Weakness and feeling tired

Impaired mental and physical development in growing children

People with infections also infect others.

3. How do worms harm the body?

Different kinds of worms behave differently from each other.

- Hookworms eat blood and cause anemia.
- Roundworms can grow as big as pencils and clump themselves into balls that obstruct intestines.
- Pinworms cause itching around the anus at night and disturb sleep.

As worms travel inside the body, they sometimes end up in the lungs causing coughing. In very rare cases, they may even end up in the brain which can lead to death.



Head of a hookworm



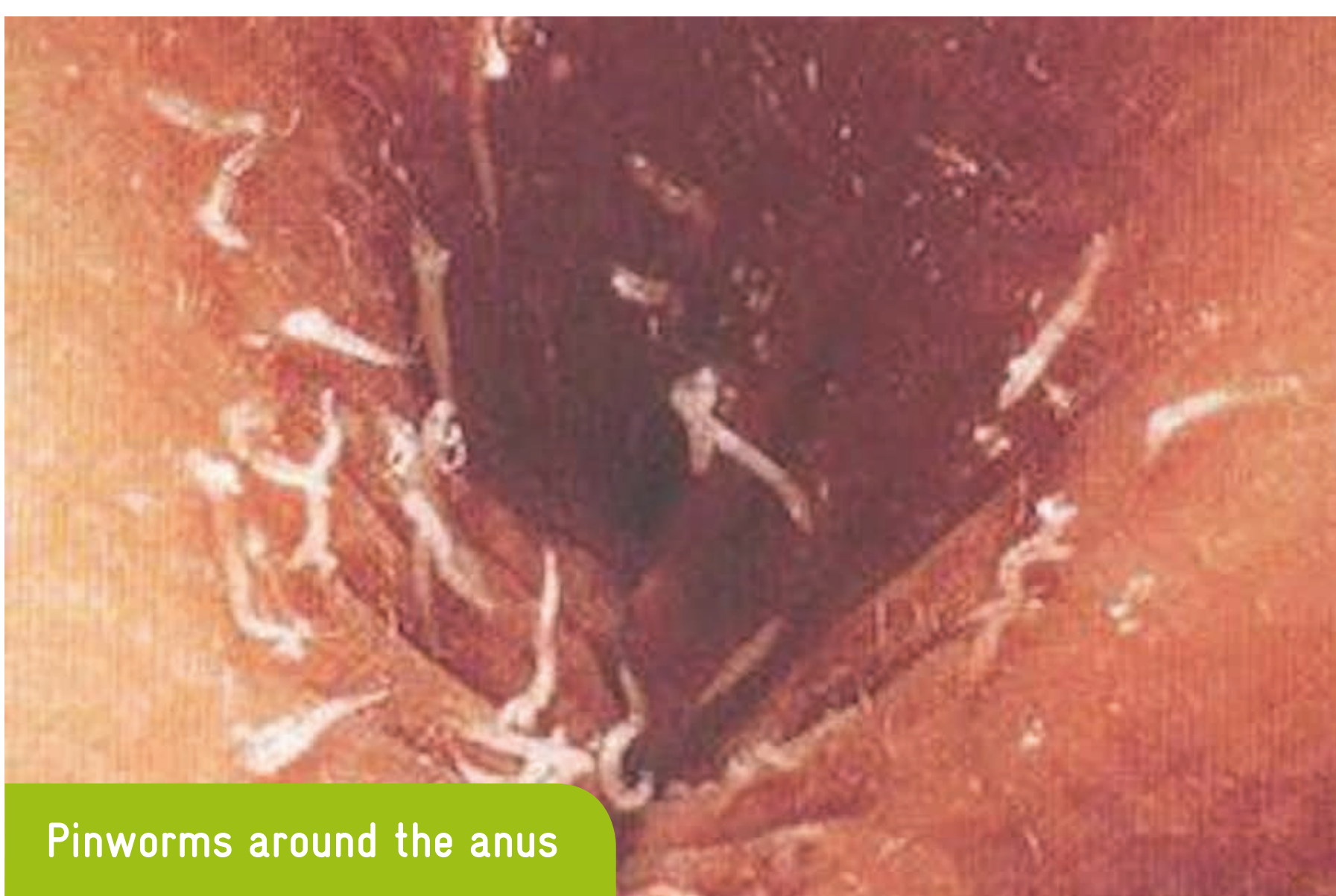
Anemic children have less energy to participate in class



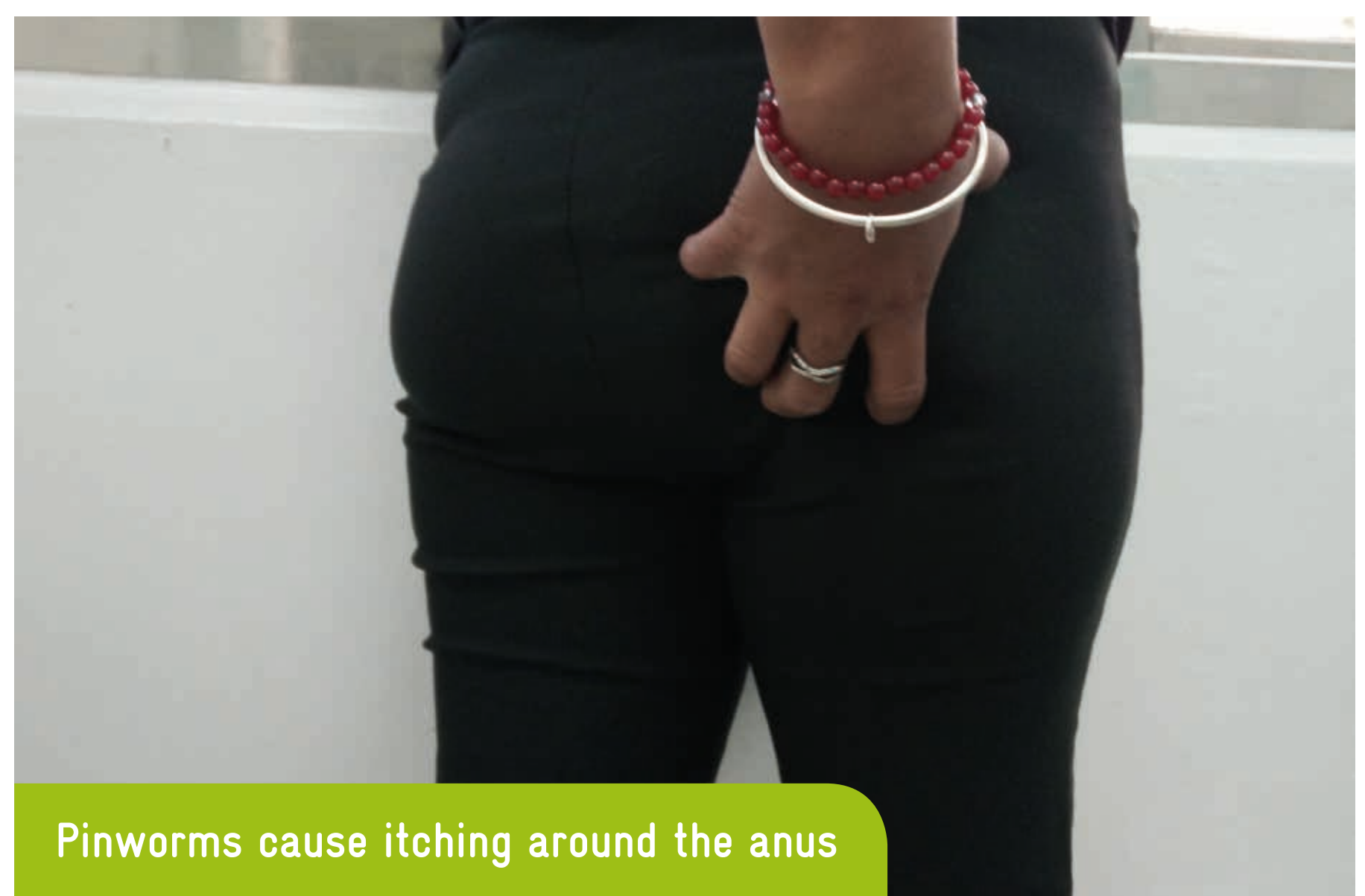
Enlarged abdomen of a child with ascariasis



Surgically removed ball of roundworms



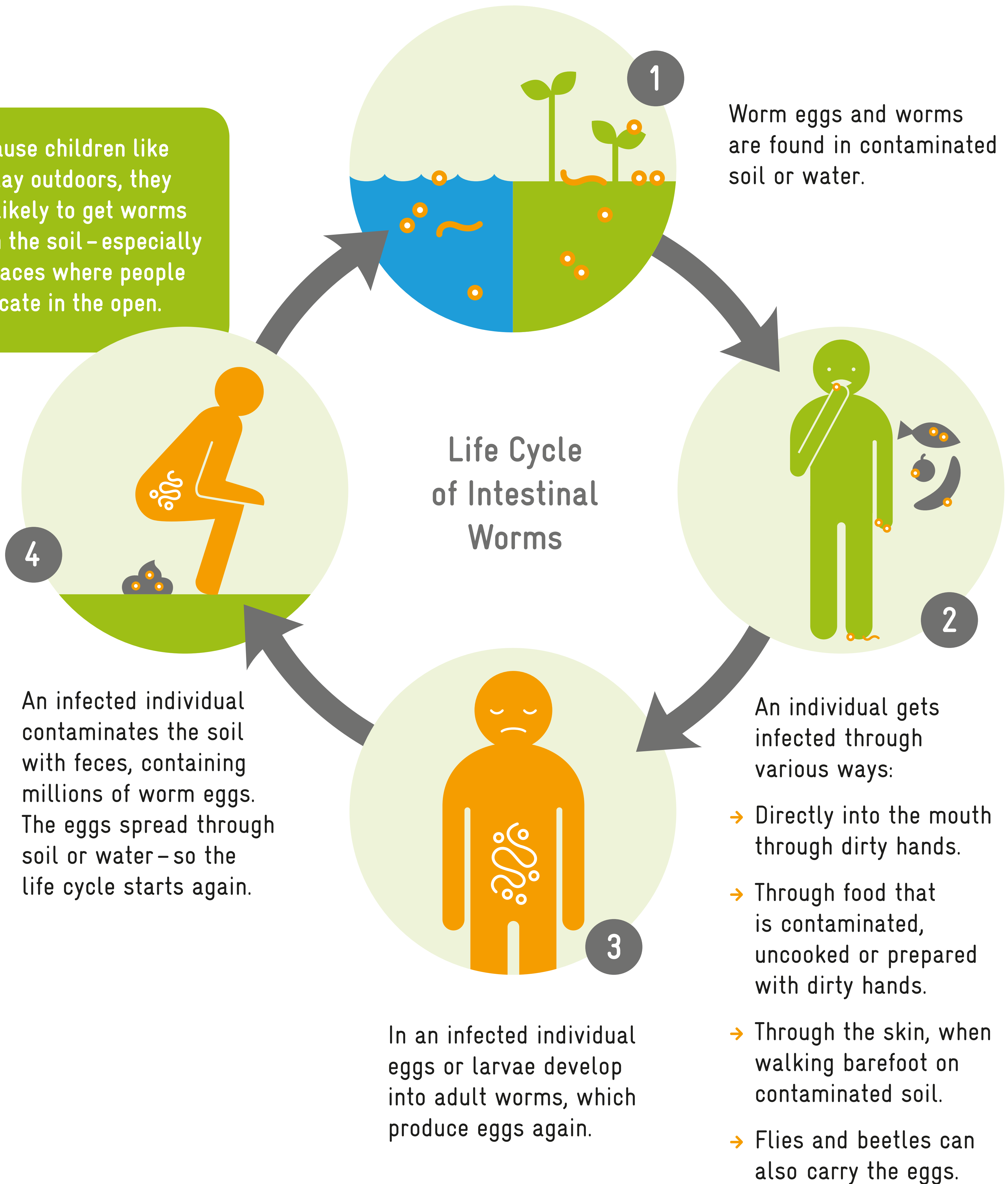
Pinworms around the anus



Pinworms cause itching around the anus

4. How do I get worms?

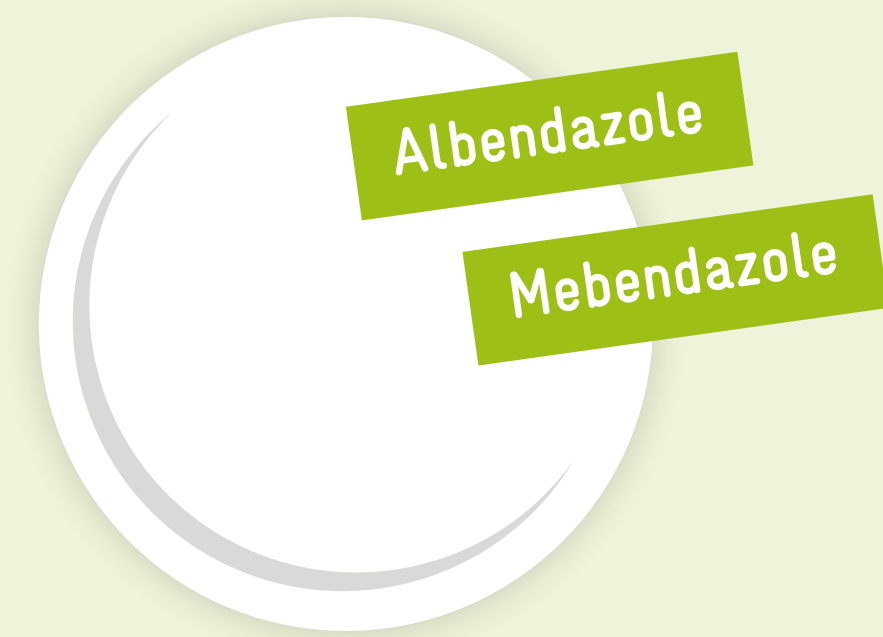
Because children like to play outdoors, they are likely to get worms from the soil – especially in places where people defecate in the open.



5. How do you get rid of worms?

Deworming tablets get rid of worms in a person's body. The medicine is called **Albendazole** or **Mebendazole**.

Both act by stopping the worm from moving, leading to its death.



The Medicine comes in the form of a flavored chewable tablet. It is very effective: Only a single dose is needed, regardless of the child's weight.

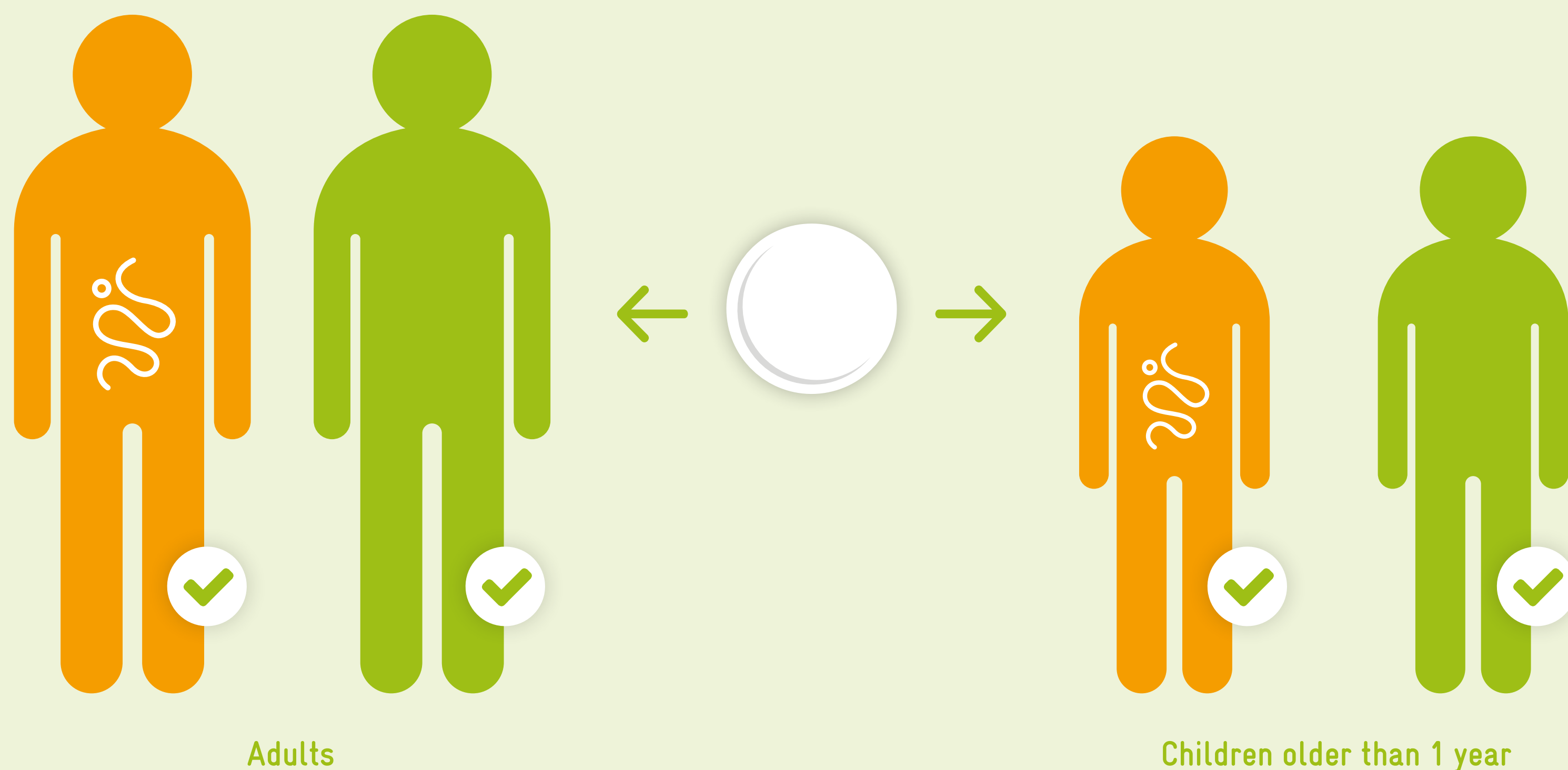
It is not true that the medicine will cause the worms to go out of mouth or nose. The worms stop moving inside the body, die and are dropped out then with defecation.

However: As long as people continue to defecate in the open, children can easily get infected again. The Department of Health therefore recommends to deworm school-age children twice a year.



6. How safe is deworming medicine?

The medicine (Albendazole or Mebendazole) is very safe. It is safe for all children older than 1 year. It is also safe to take for children and adults with no worms in their body.



Adverse effects from taking medication are rare, and usually caused by the dead worms in the person's body.

If ever these events happen, the effects are minor (vomitting, weakness, diarrhea) and can easily be managed by allowing the person to rest for a few hours and giving water.

Just like any other medication, allergies (skin rash and itchiness) may occur. This can be treated by taking anti-allergy medication.



7. Why is deworming good?



Getting rid of intestinal worms improves the general fitness and nutrition of the child, increasing the ability to fight other illnesses and even improving school performance.

Community deworming also reduces the amount of worm eggs in the soil, leading to less re-infection. The goal of deworming a community is to eventually get rid of all the worms in the environment. This is why our national government is strongly supporting school-based deworming.

The family also saves money from hospitalization in severe cases of worm infection.



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8. What can you do for prevention?

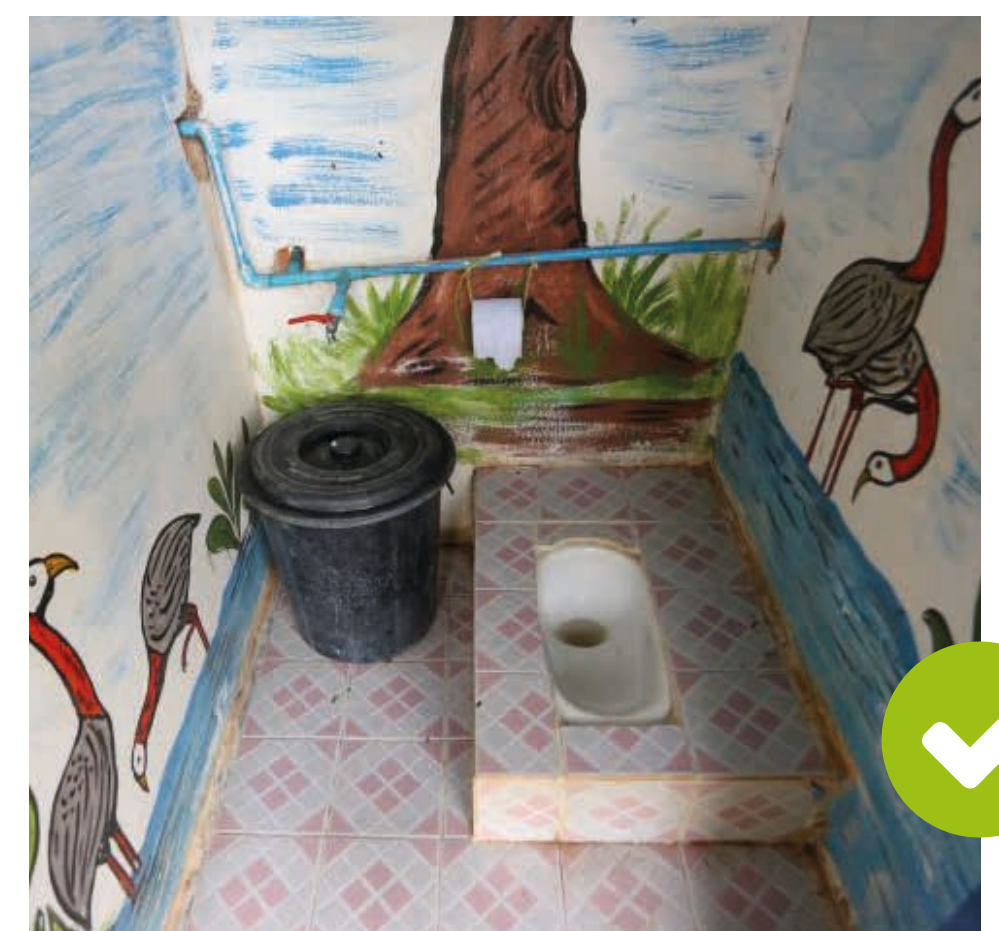
Deworm you and your child twice a year!

Deworming kills the worms and it also gets rid of the worm eggs. That reduces the spreading of worms and the reinfection of people.



Do not defecate in the open! Use the toilet!

By defecating in the open, an infected person spreads the worms eggs into the soil, water and the environment. The worm eggs can even be carried by flies from the feces to your food. Open defecation is a disgusting habit that should not be tolerated – it makes you and your community members sick.



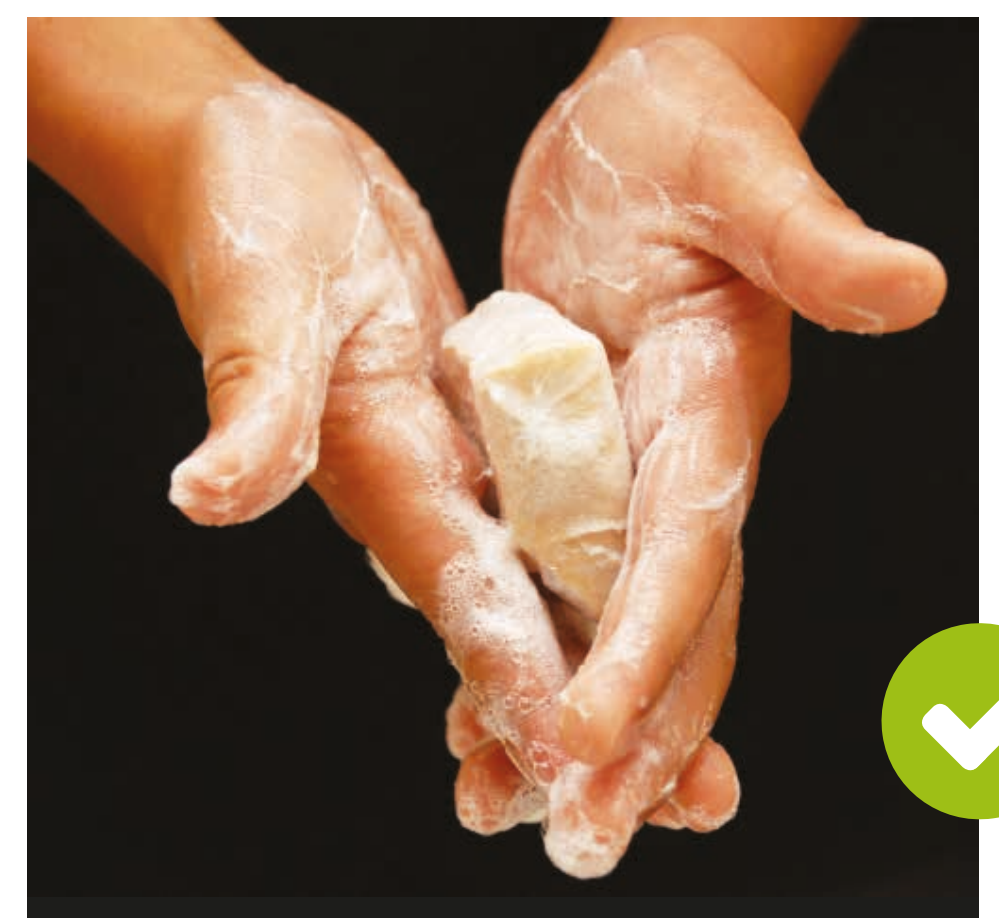
Wear shoes or slippers!

Shoes prevent you from getting in contact with worm eggs or worms on contaminated soil. Hookworms are able to enter the skin directly from the soil.



Wash your hands with soap!

Wash your hands thoroughly with soap after coming in contact with feces and soil. Wash your hands after using the toilet, before eating and before preparing food.



Wash vegetables thoroughly before eating!

Worm eggs can survive in the soil for months. If contaminated soil comes in contact with the vegetables that you plant on the ground, the eggs will spread over to the them. Washing vegetables and cooking them well gets rid of the worm eggs.

