

## OVA AND PARASITE SCREENING

---

### RATIONALE

Parasitic intestinal infestations can occur in children of all ages and are among the most common causes of morbidity and mortality worldwide. They can cause sleep disorders, malabsorption, and anemia if left untreated.<sup>1</sup> These infections may be indicative of poor environmental sanitation.<sup>2</sup>

### SCREENING REQUIREMENTS

When indicated, based upon history or presenting symptoms, three stool specimens for ova and parasites, should be collected on separate days. These tests are used to find parasites that cause diarrhea, loose or watery stools, cramping, flatulence (gas), and other abdominal illnesses.

### Bright Futures\*

Screening for ova and parasites is not addressed in Bright Futures. The following recommendations are based upon information from the listed citations.

### CONSIDERATIONS FOR REFERRAL TREATMENT AND/OR FOLLOW-UP

- Treat and initiate appropriate follow-up for any pathogens found after conducting tests for ova and parasites.
- A series of at least three negative stool specimens may be required in some cases before follow-up to treatment is complete.
- Counsel caregivers or parents on precautions for spreading infection and preventing further occurrences.

### Resources:

[Intestinal Parasites \(Parent Guide\), aboutkidshealth.ca, Trusted answers from The Hospital for Sick Children](#)

### References

- <sup>1</sup> Kucik CJ, Martin GL and Sortor BV; "[Common Intestinal Parasites](#)", *Am Fam Physician*. 2004 Mar 1;69(5):1161-1169.
- <sup>2</sup> [Parasites](#), Children, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Parasites, Children. Retrieved August 24, 2014.

\*American Academy of Pediatrics materials linked to with permission for reference only. Use of these materials beyond the scope of these guidelines must be reviewed and approved by the American Academy of Pediatrics, who can be reached at [marketing@aap.org](mailto:marketing@aap.org).