



HOOKWORMS

HOOKWORMS!!! WHAT ARE THEY?

You have been strolling down the beach in balmy Bali, or dancing all night on the sands of Koh Samui, and what happens when you get home? Your feet are itchy, you start wheezing and then you get the runs, feel nauseous and all your friends avoid you because of the excessive wind problem emanating from your behind! What could it be, have you picked up a passenger from your holiday?

Hookworms are hatched from eggs that live in animal and human faeces which remain in a shaded, moist environment. Humans pick them up by walking barefoot in the sand, or sometimes sitting with their bare buttocks in the shade on the beach! People travelling to Asian resort areas such as Phuket, Koh Samui, Bali and other destinations in tropical areas are at highest risk. The hookworm larvae penetrate human skin and form itchy red serpiginous lines while they are travelling under your skin. Eurrgh! Some species will migrate through the bloodstream to the lungs, then crawl up the airways to your mouth and are swallowed, finally reaching your bowels to feed on blood, causing the cough, wheeze, diarrhoea, nausea and flatulence along the way.



HOW CAN I PREVENT HOOKWORM INFECTION?

Hookworm infection can be prevented by using appropriate footwear and by avoiding areas of the beach that are shaded and moist. It is also important not to eat salads or uncooked vegies that may have been fertilized with poop that has not been washed off.

IS IT TREATABLE?

If you are unlucky enough to have caught hookworms, simple worm tablets and creams kill them very easily. Come to see us at Travel Medicine Centre Perth if you need more information.