

scratches, eggs are deposited on the hands and underneath the fingernails. The typical hand-to-mouth activity of youngsters makes them especially prone to reinfection. Pinworm eggs persist in the indoor environment for 2 to 3 weeks, contaminating anything they contact, such as toilet seats, doorknobs, bed linen, underwear, and food. Except for the intense rectal itching associated with pinworms, the clinical manifestations are nonspecific ([Box 6-5](#)).

Box 6-5

Clinical Manifestations of Pinworms

Intense perianal itching is the principal symptom. Evidence of itching in young children includes:

- General irritability
- Restlessness
- Poor sleep
- Bed-wetting
- Distractibility
- Short attention span
- Perianal dermatitis and excoriation secondary to itching
- If worms migrate, possible vaginal (vulvovaginitis) and urethral infection

Diagnostic Evaluation

Diagnosis is most commonly made from the tape test (see [Nursing Care Management](#)). Repeated tests to collect eggs may be necessary (3 consecutive days in the early morning before the child washes are recommended for testing [[American Academy of Pediatrics, 2015](#)]), and if there is a possibility that other family members may be infected, a tape test should be performed on them.

Therapeutic Management