

ASCARIS

Classification:

Kingdom: Animalia
Phylum: Nematoda
Class: Secernentea
Order: Ascaridida
Family: Ascarididae
Genus: *Ascaris*
Species: *lumbricoides*



(For further details [link](#))

Habit and Habitat

Endoparasitic: *Ascaris* lives inside the host's body, specifically the small intestine.

Poor Sanitation: Areas with inadequate sanitation practices are more prone to *Ascaris* infections due to the presence of contaminated soil, which harbors the parasite's eggs.

Geographic Distribution: *Ascaris lumbricoides* is found worldwide but is most common in areas with poor hygiene, such as developing nations in Africa, Southeast Asia, and Latin America.

Environmental Factors: Its prevalence is higher in warm, moist climates, as the eggs require certain temperature and humidity conditions to develop in contaminated soil.

Characters and description

- *Ascaris* is a yellowish-white or pinkish worm. Its **epidermis** is the outermost syncytial layer that covers the cuticle. The cuticle is typically a transparent, thick and non-cellular layer secreted by the epidermis.
- The females are longer and thicker, with 4-5 mm in diameter and the males are usually 2-4 mm in diameter.
- The tail end of the male *Ascaris* is curved ventrally and contains a **cloacal aperture**. Through the cloacal aperture, two equal isopapillae or **penial setae** project. The tail end of the female *Ascaris* is pointed. The anterior end of both females and males exhibits the same structures.
- The **female genital aperture** lies about one-third of the body from the anterior end. Asexual reproduction does not occur.
- They have no distinct head.
- The **mouth** is present at the anterior end and is guarded by **three lips** – two sub-ventral lips and one dorsal lip. Sensory papillae and amphids are present on the lips.
- They have a complete and straight **digestive system** with a mouth, muscular pharynx and anus.
- They show characteristic S-like locomotion as their muscles in the body wall work against their hydrostatic skeleton.