

## Hookworm genome may lead to a cure for more than 700 million infection sufferers

Scientists have decoded the genome of a lowly, blood-sucking hookworm, an advance they say could lead to cures for hookworm infection, a painful condition afflicting more than 700 million people worldwide, mostly in underdeveloped countries.

But the worm's unique relationship with the human immune system means the new findings may also provide insights into treating autoimmune diseases rampant in the United States, such as inflammatory bowel disease, multiple sclerosis, asthma and allergies.

The decoded genome of *Necator americanus*, published January 19th in the journal *Nature Genetics*, may reveal an Achilles heel — a pathway for a vaccine or drug that could either kill the worms, thwart their reproduction, or minimize the damage of their infestation.

**Read the full, original story:** [Genome of the Blood-Sucking Hookworm Decoded](#)