

## **Head Lice Information**

Head lice are commonly found in children and do not pose a threat to their health. Head lice do not carry disease nor does their presence indicate your child is dirty. Head lice treatment should begin as soon as they are discovered. Please follow the recommendations below or consult with your health care provider for his/her recommendations. Additional information can be found on the web sites listed.

Once treated, your child can return to school with a note, stating the date of treatment and the product used.

### The Facts

The louse is a small, flat, grayish insect the size of a sesame seed. It does not hop or fly, and is found only on humans. The louse's eggs, called nits, appear as tiny tan specks cemented to individual hair shafts near the scalp. Look for nits behind the ears and on the nape of the neck (upper back of the neck). They resemble dandruff but stick firmly to the hair.

Nits will hatch in 7 -10 days. Adult lice live 7 - 10 days but can only survive two - three (2 - 3) days off the body.

### Elimination

1. Check all household members for head lice.
2. Apply head lice shampoo to all affected family members to entire head while standing over the sink. Carefully follow product instructions. Dry with a clean towel. Put on clean clothing. (For children under six (6) months of age consult with health care provider before any treatment.)
3. Comb hair thoroughly with a clean comb or brush.
4. Sit in a well-lit area and section hair. Remove all nits with a nit comb, fingernails or tweezers. Go through each section carefully and thoroughly cleaning the nit comb thoroughly in warm, soapy water after each sweep through the hair.
5. Wash and dry recently worn clothing, hair ties, soft toys, and bedding on the hot settings of washer and dryer. Flip and iron the mattress.
6. Vacuum all carpets, floors, mattresses, furniture and the car. Dispose of the vacuum cleaner bag in the outside garbage bin. DO NOT USE LICE SPRAY, it is toxic and ineffective.
7. Wash combs, brushes and hair ornaments in hot soapy water, or soak in alcohol or a diluted bleach solution.
8. Notify all people who have recently been in contact with the exposed household member.
9. Vacuum daily (or at least every other day for at least one week.)
10. Re-comb affected heads DAILY (for two weeks.) If live lice are found, remove, call your health care provider for treatment recommendations (if less than seven days since your last treatment) and continue to remove nits.
11. Repeat head lice shampoo treatment after seven to ten days if live lice are seen.

(credit: Multnomah County Health Department and Educational Services, Oregon  
<http://w3.mesd.k12.or.us/shs/headlice/treat.htm>)

### Prevention

Head lice are spread from one person to another by physical contact or by shared personal articles such as combs, brushes, hats, scarves or hair ribbons, towels, sleeping bags and pillows. It is important that children be instructed not to use the personal articles of others and not to share personal articles.

During outbreaks of head lice in your community, check family members often.

For pictures of lice and additional information:

<http://www.kidshealth.org/parent/infections/common/lice.html>

[http://www.acvcisd.org/head\\_lice/headLiceEnglish.pdf](http://www.acvcisd.org/head_lice/headLiceEnglish.pdf)