

## HEAD LICE

Head lice is a common community health concern. Head to head contact or a simple exchange of hats, clothing, combs and other personal items can lead to the transmission of lice from one person to another. Now that your child is back from vacation, travel, and/or visits with friends and relatives, we encourage you to check his/her hair for signs of possible head lice. Here are some common signs. . .

- Persistent itching of scalp.
- NITS – tiny white eggs attached firmly to the hair shaft, usually found behind the ears and base of neck.
- Tiny gray or light brown insects That crawl very quickly. They DO NOT hop or fly.

**If your child has head lice you MUST notify the school immediately!**

## FACTS ABOUT HEAD LICE

- Adults are 2 to 3 mm long(about the size of a sesame seed) and brownish to grayish white in color
- Lice crawl: they **do not** jump or fly
- Head lice **do not** live on pets
- Most infestations occur in children 1-12 years of age
- Head lice require a blood meal every 4-5 hours and die in 1 or 2 days when off a person

## TREATMENT

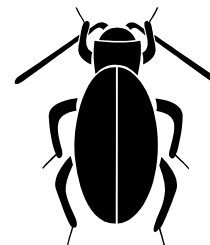
Only infested household members should be treated and all on the same day. Based on the most current research available and because it does give some residual protections from re-infestation, products containing Permethrin are the products of choice for treatment.

- Wash hair with a cleansing shampoo, i.e. Prell or Johnson's Baby Shampoo, something without any type of conditioners.
- Towel dry hair THOROUGHLY (use a fresh towel for each stage).
- Saturate hair with product from roots to ends. Use at least 1 bottle per person. People with long, thick or curly hair may have to use several bottles to saturate hair completely.
- Leave product on ONLY for the time stated by the manufacturer (Nix, 10 minutes).
- Rinse product out over a sink. NEVER in the shower. This limits the exposure of pesticides to only the head area.
- DO NOT apply any conditioners, or so-called nit(egg) removers or vinegar after rinsing out product as they DO NOT WORK.
- Comb out ALL nits with a metal fine-tooth nit comb. Separate the hair into 1 inch sections, comb each section with metal nit comb, and pin back with a hair clip. This will help you keep track of where you have already combed.
- DO NOT wash hair, or use mousse or conditioners for 5-7 days after treatment.

## CLEAN THE ENVIRONMENT

Vacuuming is the most effective tool against lice in the home. Remember to vacuum:

- Bed and mattress
- Pillows
- Baseboard around bed
- Couches
- Chairs
- Stuffed animals
- Helmets
- Backpacks
- Car seats
- Bike or skate helmets



Wipe off or vacuum headphones.

Launder washable clothing and other items used recently by infested persons in hot water. Wash bed linens, pillow cases, blankets, scarves, hair scrunches, towels, etc.

Soak all brushes and combs in HOT water for 10 minutes.

Insect sprays are NOT recommended as they are ineffective.

## INSPECT

Using natural light, carefully examine hair, scalp, sideburns, eyebrows, beards and moustaches of all household members for lice and their eggs (nits).

Nits, which are yellowish-white in color and oval shape (about the size of a sesame seed), can be easier to locate than lice. Nits are glued to the side of the hair shaft and can be found throughout the hair, especially at the back of the neck, behind the ears, and at the top of the head.

Do not confuse nits with dandruff. Unlike a nit, dandruff can be flicked or blown out of hair easily.