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## Nit Removal

Nits may be removed using a “nit comb”. Taking 1/2 inch sections of hair, comb from the scalp out to the end of the hair. Wipe the comb on a wet paper towel. Pin up the completed section and continue on all remaining hair.

Nits may also be removed using fingernail or cutting them out with a scissors. Discard the paper towel and disinfect the tools used when completed.

Check daily for live lice/nits. You will need to check daily for 2 weeks, because the nits will hatch every 7-10 days. Continue also to comb, so that they don’t have the chance to hatch.

## Repeated Infestations

Repeated infestations mean that treatment was not properly done, there was a resistance to the formula used, live lice/nits have not been properly removed or failure to examine hair and scalp frequently.

## School Screenings

Know that when your child does have active head lice/nits, he/she will be sent home until they are gone. The class that your child is in will be screened, but nothing will be said about why they are being checked. Once treatment has been applied, please bring your child back to school for evaluation by the nurse or other designated person. Please accompany your child, allowing enough time for the screener to do a thorough check. You will then be asked to come back in to the health clinic one week later and then again 2 weeks after for further evaluation.

## Spread the Word

- According to the CDC, 6-12 million people in the U.S. may get head lice each year
- Lice cannot fly, jump or swim
- Head lice do not cause disease
- Head lice is spread through HEAD-HEAD contact
- Head lice are not the result of poor hygiene
- Head lice cannot survive long without a host. Within 6-20 hours, the insects will dehydrate and die
- Remind your children that sharing hats, combs, brushes, head phones, and other personal items are not a good idea. Though the chances are small, lice can possibly be spread in this way

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# Head Lice Guide



Prevention

Education

Management

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## Prevention

The parent or guardian has the ultimate responsibility to ensure that their child is free of head lice and viable (live) nits. Check your child's head frequently, making sure to concentrate on the areas behind the ears as well as the nape of the neck.

Many people think that itching is a good indicator of head lice. However, the first infestation may produce NO signs or symptoms for 4-6 weeks. By the time that your child feels the need to itch, the infestation could have been in place for about a month.

Avoid head to head contact. Head lice travel only by crawling. Encourage your children to avoid situations where head to head contact might occur. Although not as common, head lice can travel to an item that was on the head and be transmitted to another person. Encourage your child to keep personal items to themselves.

## Education

Head lice are human parasitic insects, about the size of a sesame seed, that live on the scalp and lay eggs on the hair shaft. They dwell close to the skin, sustaining an adequate body temperature and feeding on their host's blood at least once a day.

The adult louse (average life span of 23-30 days) can lay more than 100 eggs. They lay these eggs on the hair shaft with a cement like substance, usually about 6mm from the scalp. (These are considered viable-live nits.) Nits that are farther than 1/4" from the scalp are considered non-viable. Nits should be removed.

The head lice can range in color from translucent to very dark, it is a wingless insect that only transfers by crawling.

Head lice hatch every 7-10 days, so weekly checks may be needed.

Excessive washing does not get rid of head lice. They can hold their breath for very long periods of time. The only way to get rid of them is to correctly use an OTC product.

To tell the difference between lice and dandruff, check to see how easily it is removed from the hair shaft. Dandruff moves easily while you have to really pull to remove a nit.

## Management

It is important to consult with your healthcare provider before treating young children, infants, pregnant women, or anyone having special health concerns. It is a good idea to contact a nurse, pharmacist, or physician before any treatment is started. **READ ALL INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY BEFORE STARTING TREATMENT.**

Check the scalp and hair of ALL members of the immediate household. Pay special attention to the crown of the head, the nape of the neck and behind the ears. Treat only **ACTIVE LICE** or **NITS**. Notify the other places your child spends a lot of time

### Also:

1. Wash on the **HOT** cycle all clothing, towels, bed linens, soft toys, etc used by the person in the last 3 days. Dry on **HOT** for at least 20 minutes.
2. Dry clean or store in a tightly sealed plastic bag items that are not machine washable for 14 days.
3. Vacuum all carpets, upholstery, mattresses, and cloth car seats (Discard vacuum bag)
4. Soak all combs, brushes, and hair implements for 20 minutes in hot water of at least 130 degrees F. Items may be soaked for 1 hour in rubbing alcohol or Lysol.