

ATTACHMENT #1

HEAD LICE

What are head lice?

Head lice are small insects that feed on blood from the human scalp. They do not carry bacterial or viral infectious diseases.

Having head lice does not mean that a person has poor personal hygiene or an unclean living environment.

How are head lice spread?

The most common mode of passing lice is direct head-to-head contact. Passing lice often occurs within a family or with children who have close contact at school or play. Indirect passing of lice from other objects is rare.

Head lice cannot fly or jump.

How do I know if my child has head lice?

Common symptoms of head lice are itching on the scalp, neck and ears. You may be able to see the lice on the scalp; however, it is difficult as these insects move very quickly, are small, and avoid light. You may also see lice eggs (nits) on the hair shafts – they are easiest to spot around the ears and the hairline of the neck.

The only way to confirm head lice is to have a careful exam of the hair looking for the tiny live insects or the nits.

How do I get rid of head lice?

There are over the counter and prescription therapies such as, Permethrin (over the counter), Ivermectin and Natroba (Spinosad). You should consult with your doctor about which medication would be appropriate for your child. These agents will kill the live adult lice and some eggs.

However, it is usually necessary to continue with a second treatment, 7-10 days after the initial treatment, to ensure that the left over eggs are killed as well.

Steps to removing lice and eggs:

1. Use an anti-lice shampoo, following packaging directions. Repeat 7-10 days later
2. While hair is wet, use a fine tooth metal comb to remove the tiny white eggs. Begin with small sections of hair and comb away from the scalp
 - Make sure you have good lighting
 - Don't use oils or gasoline to remove lice

How do I prevent spread of lice?

- Wash clothing and bedding in HOT (at least 130° (Fahrenheit), 54.4° Centigrade) water and dry on a high heat
- For items that cannot be washed – place them in a sealed plastic bag for two weeks to kill the lice
- Boil all hair items including brushes, combs, hair bands, hair item containers, etc.
- Vacuum the floor and fabric covered furniture

For best results, hair treatment and cleaning the environment should be done on the same day.

For more information

<http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/>