



## Head Lice

*(Where nit picking got its term!)*

**What are they?** Head lice are small wingless parasites, and are about the size of a sesame seed and feed on your blood from your head.

**How are they transmitted?** By close personal contact by either sharing hair accessories, clothing, hair grooming articles, or bedding. Also may be transmitted by being in close proximity of stored belongings, furniture, or close head to head contact.

**Symptoms of an infestation:**

- Tickling feeling as if something is moving on your head
- Chronic itching
- Sores on top of head caused by constant scratching.
- White specks on only one side of the hair shaft, like dandruff, but can not be easily be removed with out pulling the egg down on the hair shaft. If it flakes off easily most likely it is not a nit.
- Live lice seen moving either quickly or slowly on your scalp. (see picture at top of page, they are about the size of a strawberry seed)

**Where they are commonly found?** They can be found on the top of the scalp, behind the ears, and near the neck line at the back of the neck.

**Prevention:** Remind your children not to share hair accessories or grooming articles. Try not to hug other kids at school. Don't share hats or coats if at all possible



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## Facts about lice:

- They don't jump and you can't get them from your pets
- Nits are not killed with lice shampoo.
- Lice do not discriminate. You can be the cleanest or dirtiest, richest or poorest of all people. You can get it no matter what your background is!
- Live lice can only 24 hours without a human host.
- An adult louse can lay up to 10 eggs/day.

## Treatment of Lice and Nits:

Treat only the person/s that has a lice infestation using an over the counter lice shampoo for people over the age of 2. (Follow directions on the bottle precisely to avoid having lice becoming resistant to the shampoo) Be sure all clothing is removed from the waist up until the treatment is complete for that day. This prevents the lice from fleeing to other clothes.

- If the next day if live lice is seen but moving slowly do not retreat.
- Lice shampoos do not kill the nits only the live hatched bugs. You need to comb the hair with a lice comb. Do this by sectioning the hair off and with the nit comb and go thru every strand of hair to comb out the nits. Do this daily until no nits are found then repeat every 2-3 days for the next 2-3 weeks!
- Repeat lice shampoo in 7-10 days after 1<sup>st</sup> treatment.
- Wash all clothing/bedding that has come in contact with the person from the preceding 2 days and current
- Bag all non washable/dry cleaned items (i.e. stuffed animals, big bedding) for two weeks and vacuum floors routinely.
- **Check with your local school district on their head lice policy (no nits or nits) and the requirements for re-admission after lice.**

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