

How Do We Remove The Nits?

To remove them you'll need to comb out with a fine-toothed nit comb often found in treatment packages.

Before beginning, you may want to use a clean, regular comb to remove any tangles.

- (1) After parting the hair into 4 sections, select a section to work on. Start at the top of the head in each section and work down.
- (2) With one hand, lift a 1-inch segment of hair. Get the comb as close to the scalp as possible, making sure that the teeth of the comb are deep into the hair. Always comb away from the head.
- (3) For long hair, use clips to pin each segment of hair out of the way after you have combed out the nits. Clean the comb with a tissue as you go. Dispose of the tissues in a sealed bag to prevent reinfestation.
- (4) When you have finished, recheck the entire head for nits and repeat combing as necessary.
- (5) Soak and rinse all combs in hot water (above 130°F) for 15 minutes.

Wash Clothes & Clean House

To reduce the risk of spreading lice to others, machine-wash all exposed clothing, including head-gear, coats and scarves, as well as bed linens and towels in hot water, then dry them for at least 20 minutes on the hot cycle.

Items that are not machine-washable, such as stuffed toys or pillows, should be dry-cleaned or stored in tightly sealed plastic bags for about 14 days. Soak combs and brushes in hot, soapy water for 15 minutes.

Checklist For A Lice-Free Household:

- ✓ Thoroughly vacuum everywhere. This includes rugs and carpets, mattresses, upholstered furniture and car seats. Dispose of the vacuum cleaner bag after use.
- ✓ Personal items should be cleaned by machine washing in hot water (above 130°F). This includes hats, hair ribbons, scarves, coats, towels and bed linens. After cleaning, they should be dried by using the hot cycle of a dryer for at least 20 minutes.
- ✓ Combs, brushes, and hair clips should be cleaned by soaking them in hot water (above 130°F) for 15 minutes.
- ✓ Bedspreads, blankets, pillows, stuffed animals or clothing that cannot be washed should be dry-cleaned or sealed in a plastic bag for a period of 2 weeks.

A Parent's Guide on Head Lice

Lice infestations usually occur in outbreaks. So once your child is free of lice and nits, he or she could be re-exposed from friends, siblings, or classmates.



Distributed by:

TURTLE MOUNTAIN SCHOOL DIVISION

What are Head Lice?

Head lice are tiny parasites that live exclusively on the human scalp. You won't find them on cats, dogs, or any other household pet.

Head lice are grayish-white in colour, about 2-3mm in size, and unfortunately, multiply very rapidly.

Children are more likely than adults to pick up head lice, mainly because they are in close physical contact with each other. Infestations occur most commonly in classrooms and day-care centres.

This brochure shows you how to look for head lice and what measures to take if you find them on your child.

Don't Be Alarmed

If your child has head lice, there is no cause for alarm or embarrassment—head lice are a nuisance, but they are not known to transmit disease, nor do they indicate poor hygiene or uncleanliness. What's more, treatment for head lice is simple and effective.

How Lice Spread

Heat produced by the body is required for head lice to survive and their eggs (called nits) to hatch.

Typically, lice cannot survive away from the body for more than 24 hours. Because lice cannot jump or fly, they are usually transmitted during direct personal contact where the lice move quickly from one head to another. Head lice may also be picked up when sharing combs, brushes, hats, scarves, pillows, towels, stuffed toys, or just about any other article that has come into contact with an infested person.

What To Look For

In most cases, the first sign of an infestation is constant itching of the scalp, particularly around the ears and the back of the head. Rash-like red marks resulting from scratching may also be visible. If an infestation has been reported in your child's group, look for lice even if there is no obvious itch; some children don't experience any itching.

Head lice are difficult to see because they are very small and because they avoid light. Their nits, which are small, almost white and oval in shape, may be easier to spot. They can be found attached to individual hairs very close to the scalp.

Nits may look like scalp flakes or shampoo residue, but they are firmly fastened to hair shafts and difficult to remove by hand. Inspect several hairs in different areas along the hairline and around the ears.

Check Family Members

If your child has head lice, inspect the hair of family members, too. Those who are infested must be treated. You should also inform the parents of your child's friends and appropriate authorities, such as teachers, the school nurse or day-care administrator

Who Gets Lice?

Lice are very common. Personal cleanliness and hygiene are only a factor in that lice seem to prefer a clean, well-nourished host. Simply put, lice infestation can happen to anyone, anywhere, at any time. Long hair is not a factor in transmission; however, girls are affected more than boys because they are more likely to share clothing and combs.

Now What? How Do We Get Rid Of Them?

The lice will not be gone until every last one of them, including their eggs, have been killed and removed. If any lice or nits are left, they can cause reinfestation.

Treat head lice with the recommended products from the pharmacist. Use two treatments, following the directions on the product very carefully.

Children may return to school after the first treatment has been completed, and as many nits as possible removed.