

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CHILD HAS LICE

Kill the Head Lice and Remove the Nits

This option involves using two applications of a chemical head lice shampoo, 7 to 10 days apart. The shampoo kills the lice on the head but may not kill all of the nits therefore the nits need to be removed using a special “nit” comb or with your fingers. Head lice shampoos should only be used during active infestations.

Ask your pharmacists about head lice products.

STEPS TO FOLLOW

DO	REMEMBER
<p>1. Check the heads of all family members. Check hair, especially behind ears and back of neck for lice eggs (nits) – look for white to light brown oval specks “glued” to the strands of hair, very close (within 6mm or ¼ inch) to the scalp.</p>	<p>1. If one person in the family has head lice, there is an increased chance that other family members have head lice too. Dandruff can be flicked off the hair; nits are glued to the hair. Use good lighting when doing head checks.</p>
<p>2. Only family members with live head lice or live nits should be treated. Carefully read and follow directions of the head lice product. Do not use conditioners for 1 week following treatment.</p>	<p>2. Unless you treat all family members who have head lice at the same time, head lice can be passed on from one person to another when heads touch. Conditioners can reduce the effectiveness of treatment.</p>
<p>3. Remove all nits. Gently use “nit” comb (metal works best) or use your fingers to pull nits from the single strands of hair. Rinse nit comb or fingers in a sink or bowl of warm water and wipe dry after each stroke.</p>	<p>3. Metal nit combs are available at your local pharmacy. If the nit comb tugs the hair, it may be upside down. <i>Experts differ in their opinion on the need to remove nits. Nit removal is included as it helps ensure less eggs will hatch, thereby improving the effectiveness of the treatment.</i></p>
<p>4. Wash clothing worn in the past 2 – 3 days, bed sheets and pillowcases and then dry in the <u>hot</u> cycle of the dryer. If articles cannot be washed in hot water or dried on a hot cycle in the drier, put the items in a sealed plastic bag for 10 days or place the sealed bag in the freezer for 48 hours.</p>	<p>4. There is no evidence that a major clean up of the house is necessary to get rid of head lice. It is more important to treat the head lice and remove the nits. Only items that have been in direct contact with the affected person need to be washed e.g. shirts, jackets, hats, towels, combs, brushes.</p>
<p>5. Treat a second time 7 – 10 days later. Repeat step 3.</p>	<p>5. A second treatment will make sure that any head lice, which hatch after the first treatment, will be killed before they have a chance to lay any eggs. Two treatments and a follow-up check of the head with nit removal for 2-3 weeks is the best way to make sure head lice are gone.</p>