Instructions for Removing Eggs/Nits

Head lice are a nuisance and getting rid of them can be a challenge, but egg/nit removal is an important step in successful treatment to reduce the risk of re-infestation. Chemical lice killing products are effective when used as directed for killing live lice and mature larva in eggs. However, newly laid lice eggs contain insect larva whose neurological systems are not mature enough to respond to the treatment. It is these newly laid eggs that go on to hatch and re-infest the individual in 7 to 10 days. This is why no lice treatments are 100% effective at killing all lice eggs. Removing eggs is the key to successful control.

This process is time-consuming but useful in preventing recurrence. Egg/nit removal should be done every day as long as nits are present. Below are detailed removal instructions:

- Prepare for this task by selecting a place with very good lighting and something to occupy the child such as a video, TV or book. This may take 2 or more hours. Assemble supplies: nit comb (most effective ones are metal and designed for removing lice and eggs), tissues, hair clips, and a plastic bag.
- After shampooing the hair use conditioner and leave it in the hair. Towel dry then use a regular comb to remove tangles. (This is for after the initial treatment with a lice-killing shampoo).
- Starting at the crown of the head, separate a section of hair that is about 1 inch by ½ inch. Hold it out from the head. - Insert the louse comb at the base of the hair section as close as possible to the scalp and pull the comb slowly through the hair. Be sure to slant the comb so that the curved side of the teeth is towards the head. If you aren't using a comb, go through each small section of hair using your fingernails to pull the eggs off the hair.
- Use tissues to clean any lice or debris from the comb following each combing and put the tissue in a plastic bag. Continue to comb the section of hair until you feel sure it is free of nits, then pin it out of the way with a hair clip and start on the next section of hair. Repeat this process with the next 1 inch section of hair.
- If the hair dries during the combing process, wet it again with water to reduce the pulling and hair loss. - When all the hair has been combed, rinse it thoroughly with water. After the hair is completely dry, check the entire head for stray nits and remove them individually.
- To clean up, soak the comb in hot soapy ammonia water for 15 minutes or boil it for 15 minutes (only the metal ones). The plastic bag should be sealed and disposed of. If you have any questions please feel free to call your school nurse.