



## HOW TO TREAT AND REMOVE HEAD LICE AND NITS

**Head lice** are tiny wingless insects found on the head and scalp, often behind the ears or near the nape of the neck. **Nits** are the eggs that are laid by adult lice. They attach firmly to the hair shaft and can be mistaken for dandruff or hair spray droplets. Lice hatch from the eggs in 7 to 10 days if they are not treated.



### PREPARING FOR TREATMENT

Purchase an FDA- approved lice treatment and a special metal lice comb with narrow tines. Nits and lice can pass through the tines of a flexible plastic comb. You will also need: A regular comb and brush, bobby pins or hair clips, a large towel , box of facial tissue, bowl of water with dishwashing liquid added.

### TREATMENT

Apply the lice treatment according to the instructions. After rinsing the product from hair and scalp, you must carefully comb the hair with the metal fine-toothed comb to remove dead lice and nits. Follow the steps below to comb your child's wet hair.

### HOW TO COMB THE HAIR

- Combing should be done in a well-lit area. Seat the child so her/his head is just below eye level. Use a regular comb or brush to first remove any tangles. If the treatment comes with a special gel, be sure to apply the gel before combing.
- Separate the child's hair into a section that is slightly wider than the width of the lice comb. It is important to separate the hair into small sections so you can more easily see lice and nits. Hold the section of hair with one hand. With the other hand, hold the lice comb in a slanting position with the teeth toward the head. Insert the comb as close to the scalp as possible since the eggs are first laid within 1/2 inch of the scalp. Gently pull the comb slowly through the hair several times. Check the hair carefully. Comb one section at a time and check each section again. Pin the hair out of the way, curling it flat against the head.
- Whenever you comb out nits or live lice, dunk the comb in the soapy water and make sure the comb is clean before you use it on the hair again. Clean the comb frequently with a tissue. After combing, flush the contents of the bowl down the toilet. Wash the lice comb in hot ,soapy water for at least 10 minutes.
- When the hair is dry, check for stray nits and remove those hairs individually with a pair of small scissors.

**IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO REMOVE ALL LICE AND EGGS**

## PREVENTING RE-INFESTATION

Remember- nits are very tiny and you may find them first on the hairs at the nape of the neck and behind the ears. But they can live anywhere, so look all over the scalp.

Be sure to thoroughly check and comb your child's head daily for 2-3 weeks to ensure that all nits are removed and no new lice appear.

Most lice treatments require a second application, usually in 7-10 days. Follow the instructions so that any remaining or newly hatched lice are removed. A second combing will be necessary. Nits that were not killed during the first application can hatch in 7-10 days.



### FOLLOW THESE STEPS TO PREVENT RE-INFESTATION:

1. Check all family members at the same time and treat them if lice are found.
2. After finishing treatment with the lice medication, re-check everyone in your family for lice after one week. If live lice are found, contact your health care professional.
3. Machine wash and dry the child's recently worn clothing, bedding and towels using hot, soapy water and the high heat drying cycle. This will kill both lice and nits. Articles such as stuffed animals, pillows, hats, headphones can be vacuumed or sealed in a plastic bag and stored for 2 weeks.
4. Teach your child to avoid head-to-head contact during play and other activities.
5. Instruct your child not to share combs, brushes, hats or other articles of clothing.
6. Soak family combs and brushes in hot water for at least 10 minutes. Every family member should have their own comb and brush.
7. Continue to check your child's hair for the presence of lice or nits. Comb his/her hair regularly with a nit comb.
8. Vacuum the floor and furniture, particularly where the person with the lice may have sat or laid. Head lice live less than two days if they fall off the scalp and cannot feed.

**Mandatory attendance laws require all children to be in school. Therefore, it is expected that if your child has been sent home with lice and/or nits, he/she will be treated and will return lice-free the next school day. A parent must accompany the child upon return to school. Before readmission to school, a staff member will re-check your child for lice. Staff members will re-check your child periodically to be sure that treatment was effective.**

