

HEAD LICE

What is it?

- Tiny bugs that live on the hair

What do I see?

- Itchy head
- Gray bugs that are fast moving.
- Many bugs may be on the back of the neck.
- Lice eggs (nits) may be stuck like glue on the hair close to the scalp. Eggs look like small, white specks. If you think it is dry skin (flakes)-- flick the hair. If it moves, then it is a flake. If it doesn't then it is a nit.

What can I do at home?

- If your child does not have lice, you may use shampoo that has peppermint oil or tea tree oil as an ingredient daily to help repel lice. Continue to check your child's hair nightly for a week.
- If your child does have lice, wash hair with a special shampoo or rinse made to kill lice. You can buy it at the drug store.
- These shampoos and hair rinses are poisons. Read the label. Use with care.
- You don't have to treat everyone in the family.
- Use a fine tooth comb to remove lice eggs from hair. **Comb through hair every night after your child has washed their hair. This is the key to getting rid of lice.** The special shampoo kills the bugs but does not kill the nits.
- Use a good light to help see the lice. Take off the white specks when hair is damp. All the specks must be taken off the hair.
- Wash all combs, brushes, hair bands with shampoo and hot water.
- Wash sheets, jackets, stuffed toys and other things that may have touched your child's head. Use hot water and dry in dryer for at least 20 minutes to kill lice.

- If you continue to find nits in your child's hair, put child's linen in the dryer after he/she awakens for at least 20 minutes.
- You can place items that cannot be washed in the dryer for 20 minutes to kill lice.
- You also need to vacuum mattresses, furniture, and rugs. Do this so the lice will not come back.
- Don't forget to clean the inside of your car.
- Avoid sleepovers until all signs of lice have been gone for one week.

When should I seek help from the doctor?

- Home care does not get rid of the lice.
- Head lice keep coming back.

What else should I know about head lice?

- Head lice can happen even if your child is clean and well cared for.
- Tell the school if your child has head lice. Then children in the class can be checked.
- Lice live off the hair for a short time. Clean house well and keep children away from lice.
- The lice shampoo will not kill the eggs (nits). You must take them off the hair. Use a fine tooth comb.
- Check the heads of everyone living in the household every day for 7 days. Treat accordingly.
- Children can go back to school after washing with the special shampoo. Continue to go through hair nightly for 7 days removing nits.
- You do not need to use bug spray on the furniture or the house.
- Teach your children not to share head items with others. These include hats, combs, headphones and headbands