

## Head Lice Facts

Head lice are small, whitish to reddish brown wingless, blood sucking insects that live in human hair. People get head lice from direct hair to hair contact with another person who has head lice.



### Headlice

#### FACTS ABOUT HEAD LICE

- Lice do not jump, hop or fly. People become infected by the lice swinging like trapeze artists from hair on one head to the hair of another head.
- Lice may move onto hats, combs, helmets, hair ties and other surfaces, but must return to a human head to survive within 24 hours.
- Head lice do not live in carpets, sandpits or on animals.
- Not everybody will itch so you must look for lice and eggs (nits).
- Adult head lice are the size of tiny ants and range in colour from skin-tone to dark brown. Each of the six legs of a head louse ends in a claw. These are used to grasp the hair with such strength that head lice are difficult to dislodge.
- Nits are the eggs laid by female lice and are the size and colour of a grain of sugar. Heat generated by the body hatches eggs.
- Eggs are laid very close to the scalp and stick like glue to the hair. They hatch within 7 days. The earlier the lice are identified and treated the less time there is for eggs to hatch.

#### TREATMENT AND PREVENTION

- Removal of eggs must be done following application of head lice treatment. Eggs can be removed by combing with a special head lice comb or with the fingernails. If eggs are not removed the problem may recur.
- Conditioner applied to dry hair weakens the grip of the lice and makes it difficult to hang onto the hair. Comb the hair with a special head lice comb and look for the lice by wiping the comb onto a tissue. The eggs are also easily identified this way.
- Lice live on strands of hair but move to the scalp to feed. It is important that all of the hair is completely covered with the head lice treatment and is used according to instructions.
- No head lice treatment will kill 100% of the eggs. You must use the treatment 7 days after the first treatment to kill any lice that may have hatched.
- Wash combs, brushes, hair ties and hats in detergent and hot water.
- There are 4 different types of head lice treatments available. All have different main ingredients, eg pyrethrins, synthetic pyrethrins, malathion and herbal agents. If a head lice problem continues try a treatment with a different main ingredient
- Lice can be weakened by thoroughly brushing hair morning and night. When injured or weakened, lice have difficulty gripping the hair.

- Gel and hair spray applied to the hair can be used as a preventative measure against infestation – these products make the hair sticky thereby making it difficult for them to move around on the head
- Get into the habit of checking the hair every time it is washed. Daily checking is necessary if there is an outbreak as everybody may not itch
- Avoid direct head to head contact with others.
- Don't share hats, combs, hair ties etc.
- Keep long hair tied back or plaited.
- Never use treatments as a preventative.



### Further Information

Please see over page for Head lice product information.

For further information relating to head lice please contact the environmental health section on 8384 0628.

## Head Lice Products Available

Active insecticide group	Commercial Product	
1. <b>PYRETHRINS</b>	Amcal Head Lice Foam Pyrthrum Shampoo, Banlice Mouse  Conditioner & Spray Delva Formula PCT Lyban Foam Meditox Foam Pyrenel Pyrifoam Lotion	4. <b>COMBINATIONS of herbal/essential oils with natural pyre-</b>  Lice Blaster Pyrethrum Lice oil KP 24 Natural
2. <b>SYNTHETIC PYRETHROIDS (bioallethrin, permethrin)</b>	Orange Medic Orange Medic Plus Parallice Lice Breaker Quellada Creme Rinse Quellada Head Lice Treatment	5. <b>OTHER PRODUCTS (Cyclomethicone, Isopropyl myristate)</b>  Full Marks Hedrin
3. <b>ORGANOPHOSPHATES (maldison or malathion)</b>	Cleensheen Exolice Medicated Foam HL7 HLT Lice Rid KP24 Lotion KP24 Foam LX Medicated Foam	6. <b>PREVENTATIVE PRODUCTS</b>  Quit Nits Defence Spray Neutra Lice Egg Remover Ruby Lane—Happy Hair Mist
4. <b>COMBINATIONS of herbal/essential oils</b>	Herbs for Headlice Lice Attack NeutraLice Wild Child - Quit Nits Treatment Sunspirit Aromatherapy Lice Scents to Kill!! Wild Child All Natural Head Lice Treatment Eucanol Nitslip Eco Kid Moov Electric Blue Tea Tree Lice Foam Nads Lice Foam Nads Combing solution HL7 Resist Lice shield Fried Lice Gel –PPS Licetec shampoo Praneem repel natural shampoo essence Roseneath Organics All Natural Head lice lotion	

