

# HEADLICE ADVICE

## What are head lice??

- Small insects (size of a sesame seed), no wings.
- They feed on human blood.
- They do not live on your pets.
- They can make your head feel itchy.
- Adult lay approx 10 eggs a day eggs take 7 – 10 days to hatch.
- Daily shampooing will not stop you getting head lice.
- Nits (eggs) can be found anywhere on the head.
- A female head louse may start to lay eggs as early as nine days after she has hatched. So to break the cycle and stop them spreading, they need to be removed within seven days of hatching.



## How can you get them??

- By sharing a comb, brush or helmet with someone who has head lice.
- When your heads or hair touch, (the lice can walk from one head to another).

## Where to look for them??

- Close to the scalp.
- Behind the ears
- The back of the neck.
- The top of the head
- Under the fringe

## What to look for??

- Adult head lice are 2 – 4 mm long
- Live lice remain close to the scalp
- Nits are dead or empty egg shells which you can remove by hand or by combing

## How to get rid of them??

The wet combing method involves removing the head lice by combing the hair using a special fine-toothed comb.

However, for wet combing to be effective, it involves regular and thorough combing which is time consuming.

The wet combing method is described below:

- Wash the hair using ordinary shampoo and apply ample conditioner, before using a wide-toothed comb to straighten and untangle the hair.
- Once the comb moves freely through the hair without dragging, switch to the head lice comb. Make sure that the teeth of the comb slot into the hair at the roots with the edge of the teeth lightly touching the scalp.
- Draw the comb down to the ends of the hair with every stroke and check the comb for lice.
- Remove lice by wiping or rinsing the comb.
- Work methodically through the hair section by section so that the whole head of hair is combed through.
- Rinse out the conditioner and repeat the combing procedure in the wet hair.
- Repeat the procedure on day 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15, to clear the young lice as they hatch, before they have time to reach maturity.

## Using lotions or sprays

- Using a lotion or spray is an alternative method for treating head lice. However, to be effective they need to be used correctly.
- A lotion or spray should only be used if a living (moving) head louse is found
- Make sure that you have enough lotion to treat everyone in your family who is affected. Use enough to coat the scalp and the length of the hair during each application.
- **Follow the instructions that come with the lotion or spray** when applying it.
- The normal advice is to treat the hair and repeat after seven days. Some products also supply a comb for removing dead lice and eggs.
- A minimum of two applications of lotion are needed to kill the lice over the hatching period because the lotions do not always kill louse eggs.
- **Remember to check your child's hair once a week**

