

FROM THE DESK OF YOUR SCHOOL NURSE

# COULD YOUR CHILD COME HOME WITH HEAD LICE?

Understand the problem before it becomes one.

## **A lice infestation can happen to anyone.**

Socioeconomic background or lack of cleanliness has nothing to do with determining who gets lice.

## **Lice are insects.**

They are an easily treatable condition that can be eliminated once they are discovered.

## **You can prevent your child from getting lice.**

Lice do not jump or fly. They crawl. Tell your child no to share combs, hats or other clothing.

## **Do not be embarrassed if your child is sent home because of lice.**

Between 8 and 12 million children get lice each year.

## **Know the symptoms of a lice infestation.**

If your child is constantly itching, check the scalp for lice or eggs. The eggs will appear as white specks stuck to the hair near the scalp.

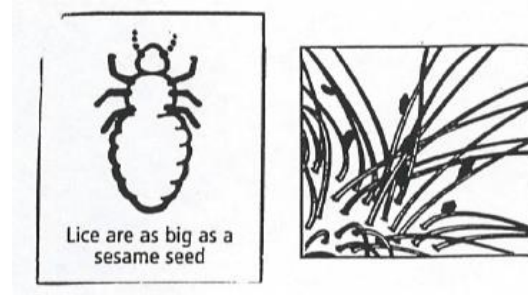
## **Do not send your child to school if you suspect lice.**

Check with your school nurse for proper instruction on how to treat a lice infestation. [(423) – 232-5380]

# What to do if your child comes home with head lice:

## 1. Check every member of the family.

Look for tiny white eggs (nits) or hair shafts, near the scalp, especially at the nape of the neck and behind the ears. Head lice are small grayish-tan insects without wings. Family members should be treated.



## 2. Use an effective head lice treatment.



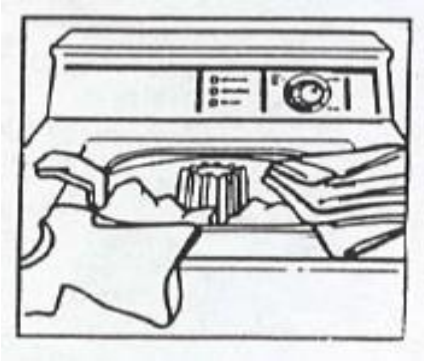
Several are available without prescription and the most popular ones are RID and NIX. NIX is a cream rinse – apply it after washing well with a shampoo with no shampoo additives. Towel dry the hair well, then apply lice shampoo. RID is a shampoo – it is applied to dry hair. Follow instruction closely of all products. You should retreat in 7 – 10 days. For more information, call your school nurse (423) 232-5380.

## 3. Remove all nits.

Gently comb the child's hair with the special nit removal comb. These combs are usually provided with the lice treatment products. Pulling nits off with your fingers is usually necessary.



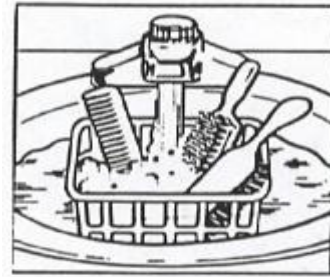
#### 4. Wash clothes, bed linens and towels.



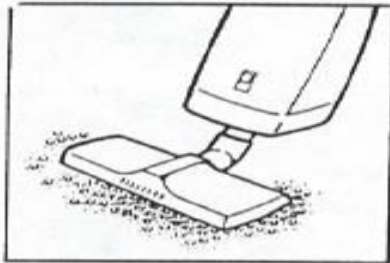
Use hot water and dry on hot cycle for at least 20 minutes. Items no machine washable must be dry cleaned or stored in a tightly sealed plastic bag for at least 7-10 days. Items such as headphones and helmets should be similarly bagged and stored. Any lice/eggs present will not survive without host.)

#### 5. Soak combs, brushes, etc., in hot water.

The hotter the better, but at least 130° F. Items should be allowed to soak for 5 – 10 minutes. Use some lice shampoo to soak in.



#### 6. Vacuum everywhere.



To make sure the rest of your home is louse free, you should vacuum carpets, pillows, mattresses, upholstered furniture, and even the car seats.

#### 7. You may use bedding spray for lice –

but follow directions carefully. Do not forget the car seats.

HEAD LICE CANNOT SURVIVE WITHOUT A HUMAN HOST. THEY CANNOT SURVIVE ON FAMILY PETS. CHOOSE AN EFFECTIVE TREATMENT, USE AS DIRECTED, AND PERFORM THE STEPS LISTED ABOVE TO ELIMINATE HEAD LICE FROM YOUR HOME AND HELP PREVENT THEIR SPREAD IN THE COMMUNITY.