

Dreaded Head lice

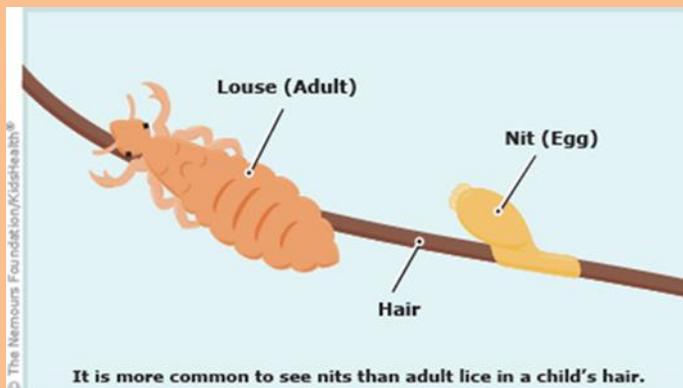
Head louse (plural of lice) are tiny wingless parasitic insects that live among human hair and they are common in children from 3 to 12 years of age.

They are not dangerous and don't spread disease but are VERY contagious.

Their bites may cause a child's scalp to become itchy and inflamed so therefore it is wise to treat the head lice as soon as possible.

Nits (eggs) can look like dandruff, only they can't be removed by brushing or shaking them off. They are usually tiny, white and shiny but can be opaque white on dark hair.

When the lice hatch they are about 2mm long and take on the colour of the hair which can sometimes be hard to see, they can be pink on blonde hair.



You may be able to see the lice or nits by parting your child's hair into small sections and checking with a fine-tooth comb on the scalp, behind the ears, and around the nape of the neck.

Check in natural daylight as it is virtually impossible to see in artificial light.

To test if an egg is alive or not, it must be carefully eased off the hair placed where it can be squashed. If it makes a cracking or popping sounds you will know it is a live egg.

Treatment

It is advised that you visit your Doctor as they can recommend a medicated shampoo, cream rinse, or lotion to kill the lice.

We have found that the over-the-counter shampoos and lotions are not killing the head lice because they are often very mild.

After treatment, the hair must be carefully combed with a fine tooth-comb to remove as many eggs as possible. Start near the scalp and carefully draw the comb to the ends of the hair.

It is important that no child returns to school until all signs of infestation have cleared. The school Nurse will carry out a further check before the child returns to class. A clearance note from your Doctor will also be required.