



HEAD LICE: A COMMON PROBLEM



What are head lice?

Head lice are insects that live on the human scalp. They lay eggs (nits) which attach to the hair shaft and hatch in about 6-10 days.

Who gets head lice?

Anyone can get head lice. Young children are particularly at risk in group environments like schools and child care.

How are head lice spread?

Lice must crawl from one person or object to another. This happens most often when heads touch (sleeping together, hugging, playing), or personal items are shared (combs, brushes, hats, car seats, bedding).

How are head lice diagnosed?

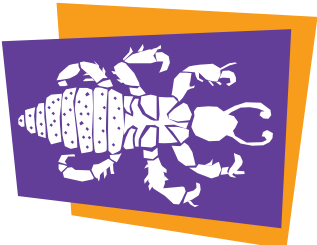
Diagnosis is usually made by finding nits attached to the hair near the scalp.

How are head lice treated?

Treatment involves getting rid of the lice and nits from the infested people, environment and personal items.

How are head lice prevented?

Teach children not to share personal items such as hats, combs, brushes, hair ribbons, scarves, towels or bedding. Place items in children's cubbies so that coats and clothing do not touch.



- Develop a clear written policy.
- Communicate your policy with families and staff.
- In case of active infestation, make "head checks" a daily or weekly activity.