

## Lice Advice



Lice are not dangerous and they do not spread disease but they are contagious and are bothersome to those who need to take time you need to treat it. Lice are a usual occurrence and an inconvenience in the already hectic life of a Foster Parent.

Head lice are mainly acquired by direct head to head contact with an infected person's hair. Lice are frequently transferred with shared hats, combs and other hair accessories. Lice may also stay in bedding and upholstery for brief periods.

Lice are about the size of a sesame seed and are brownish tan; they may be darker in darker hair. Lice feed on tiny amounts of blood every 4 to 6 hours. The lice cannot survive off the scalp more than three days. With the bites come the itching and scratching. Persistent scratching can lead to scalp irritations and even infection. Children with reoccurring or long term lice infection can develop sores in the scalp. Your doctor may treat this irritation with topical or oral antibiotic ointment. Using treatment shampoos with harsh chemicals is not advisable with children with these scalp irritations.

Lice hatch after about 8 days and attain the adult stage at 9 to 12 days. Adult female lice usually cement each egg to the base of the hair shaft near the skin at a rate of 6 eggs /day. As the hair grows the eggs are moved up the hair shaft. Generally an infected person has fewer than a dozen active lice on the scalp at one time. They may have hundreds of viable, dead, and hatched eggs at one time.

If it is necessary to use these insecticide shampoos follow directions.

- do not use hair dryer, lice treatment shampoo ingredients may be flammable
- do not wash hair for 1-2 days after using treatment, ingredients in shampoo are active for several days after treatment
- do not use cream rinse or shampoo/conditioners before or after applying lice medication
- do not use the same medication more than three times on one person
- do not use more than one head lice medication at one time on the same person

Fine tooth combs can be purchased from a drug store or a pet supply store. When combing through hair continuously clean the fine tooth comb. After you have finished using the comb in the hair, soak the fine tooth comb in hot water with some bleach in the water.

Soak in hot water hair care items like combs, brushes, barrettes, hair ties, and head bands.

All bedding and clothing need to be washed in hot water cycle and a hot drier for 20 minutes. Preventative, do not share combs, brushes, hats, barrettes bandanas, hair ties, towels, and helmets with any one else whether they may have lice or not. Check members of the household every three to four day that may come into regular contact with an infected person.

If you feel you are following direction and your child still has lice it may be one of the following

- there is still live nits being left behind
- your child is being exposed to someone with lice
- the treatment you're using isn't effective

Treatment of lice is necessary and happens at a time that is not convenient. several hours sitting and picking each time.

This may take two nights of work for

Advice from *foster mom*...a non toxic treatment of head lice

Use pure tea tree oil from a health food store

Use four or five drops oil directly into the hair.

Rub thoroughly into the hair until all the hair is coated. The oil coats the hair and suffocates the live lice in the hair.

You still need to use a fine tooth comb to get rid of the nits (eggs) that are in the hair.

Robi Comb- (\$42.00 + tax) may be available through Shopper Drug Mart .

This comb is effective on getting out the live bugs that are in the hair.

You will still need to pick out the eggs in the hair so that you do not have further lice infestation.

### **Head Lice Home Remedy**

This recipe can be used instead of treatment shampoos that may burn the scalp after repeated uses. There is a possibility that the lice will become tolerant to these chemicals and will not be affected by these shampoos. This recipe can be used repetitively with no harmful side effects.

You will need:

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup Mineral Oil

Shower cap

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup Vinegar

Fine Tooth Comb- specifically for Lice and Nits (egg)

Recipe Mix 50:50 (half and half) mixture of vinegar and mineral oil about  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup each.

Massage mixture into hair, Cover hair with shower cap for about 1 hour. After the 1 hour remove shower cap and with nit comb, remove all lice and nits (eggs). The vinegar detaches the nits (eggs) from the hair shaft while the oil suffocates any live lice and makes it easy for smooth removal. After lice and nits are removed wash hair with a regular shampoo.