

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

QUESTION: *I am having a hard time knowing what nits look like. And, how would I know if nits are alive, dead or hatched?*

ANSWER: Nits are laid on the hair and glued to one side of the hair shaft. They are usually laid on single strands of hair, close to the scalp, but not on it. Nits are not round, but oval. They are light-colored when first laid (yellowish or gray), but darken to a tan or coffee color as the embryo develops. Once the egg hatches, the spent shell remains attached to the hair shaft. As the hair grows, the nit grows with it and is farther from the scalp.

QUESTION: *Isn't there anything that will help remove nits from the hair? So many products claim to do this, but I am having a hard time finding a product that works.*

ANSWER: The protein in the nit glue is chemically closed to the protein in hair itself. Any solvents that would dissolve the glue are likely to damage the hair. Manually removing the nits with a high quality lice comb is your best option. We recommend The LiceMeister© removal comb.

QUESTION: *Are lice and nits resistant against malathion and/or permethrine, the active insecticides in most lice treatments?*

ANSWER: Yes! Increasing resistance is being reported against these insecticides; the active ingredients in most prevailing lice treatments are failing. No single traditional insecticide base lice treatment now guarantees a successful treatment without manual removal of all nits as well.

QUESTION: *What can we do to prevent head lice?*

ANSWER: The sooner the nits (eggs) and lice are detected, the easier it is to remove them because they multiply quickly. The Lice Clinic recommends that parents of young children screen regularly, make it part of your regular hygiene practices.

HOW TO CHECK FOR HEAD LICE

- Start by getting a good light, a magnifying visor and two screening sticks.
- Use the sticks to part and separate the hair so you can see easily to the root of the hair shaft. Look for tiny, tan coloured, smooth oval shaped eggs (nits).
- Nits are always cemented to one side of the hair shaft and are usually found close to the root. The female louse lays her eggs in groupings of 8 to 10 so if you spot a nit look for more nits in the same general area.
- Run your fingers along the hair shaft to see if you can easily move the suspected nit. If it truly is a nit it will not slip or fall off the hair shaft. If it does move, it most likely is not a nit as nits need to be pulled off the hair shaft with your finger nails or a good lice comb. They are difficult to remove.
- Work your way around the head separating the hair and having a close look. Focus on the Hot Spots; these are the warmest areas on the head. Behind the ears at the nape of the neck and on the crown of the head is where the female lice like to lay her eggs.
- Finally have a good look throughout all the hair. If you want to know if there are any live lice present the Wet-Combing method is the best method to screen for live lice. Wet-combing slows the live lice down which makes them easy to remove.

HOW TO GET RID OF HEAD LICE

Approaches to removal vary but all have to include manual removal of lice and their eggs to have complete success. Even if you chose to use a pesticide product to kill most of the live lice, manual removal is necessary to address the eggs or they will continue to hatch. The wet combing method is designed on breaking up the life cycle of the louse by manually removing all live lice and their eggs. Lice that hatch after the first comb-out are removed with each following comb-out and long before they have a chance to reproduce and continue the lifecycle.

Head lice are not able to survive off their human host past 48 hours. They dehydrate at a very fast rate and die. Focus your cleaning in the areas where the infested person has been in the last 2 days.

WET-COMBING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Liberally apply conditioner on dry hair, saturating all hair and scalp.
2. Comb hair with de-tangling comb to remove all knots.
3. Use the pin tail comb to separate the hair into four manageable sections; use the hair clips to hold sections in place.
4. Cleaning one section at a time. Undo first section, using your pin tail comb to take out a thin small section of hair starting at the bottom of the hair line. This hair will be combed out first. Clip back the hair you're not working with.
5. Position the teeth of the lice comb as close to the root of the hair shaft as possible, and then pull the comb through the full length of the hair, from the root to the tip. Inspect all sides of the small section of hair for nits or live lice. If any lice or nits remain use tweezers to pull off.
6. Continue taking small sections working your way up until all hair in section has been combed. Rinse and wipe the comb after every pass.
7. Continue combing through each section in the same manner. When the section has been cleared clip back out of the way and continue till all four sections have been cleared.
8. Once all sections have been combed out, remove the separation clips and finish up by passing the lice comb through the entire thickness of hair working from the crown to the tip. If the comb is pulling, add a spritz of water to re-moisten the hair. Make several passes combing around the entire head. Wipe the comb between passes on a paper towel or rag and thoroughly inspect for lice and nits.
9. Rinse out the conditioner.
10. Soak all tools in hot soapy water (or boil for 1 minute), wash towels and rags in hot water and dry using the hottest setting.

Follow these instructions every 3 days for two weeks or until you have successfully combed out twice without finding any evidence of lice and/or nits. Continue to screen weekly for one month to confirm complete removal of all lice and their nits.

