

## Head lice Notice

Head lice have been seen in your child's hair today. Please start treatment before your child returns to school. Please use the information below to guide your treatment

There are two main methods of dealing with a head lice infestation

### Wet combing and use of insecticidal lotions.

Whichever option is chosen, it is important to recognise that **neither will protect against re-infection.**

#### Use of insecticidal lotions

Do not use lotions unless live lice are found.

Check all close family/friends by the 'wet combing' method described below.

If using a lotion, follow the instructions on the product packet and make sure you have enough lotion to treat all those who may be affected.

**The lotion used may be capable of killing eggs as well as lice, but there is no certainty of this.**

Check for baby lice hatching out from eggs **three to five days** after you use it and again at **ten to 12 days**.

If the lice appear to be unaffected by the lotion or if the problem persists, you should take advice from your local school nurse, health visitor, pharmacist or GP. **You should seek advice where whoever is being treated is under one year of age, suffers from asthma or allergies, or is pregnant or breast feeding.**

#### Wet combing or 'bug busting' method

The 'bug busting' method is an alternative method, devised by the charity Community Hygiene Concern, which avoids the use of insecticides.

It aims at systematic removal of live lice by combing through the hair and physically removing any lice found.

After washing the hair, and, after detangling with an ordinary wide-tooth comb **copious amounts of conditioner** should be applied.

With the person sitting upright or leaning over the bath, comb the hair from the roots using a special 'bug buster' fine-tooth comb, with the teeth of the comb slotting into the hair at the roots with every stroke. After each stroke, the lice should be cleared from the comb.

Wet lice find it difficult to escape from this combing. It is hard for them to keep a grip on hair which is slippery with conditioner, and so removal with the comb is easier.

The lice should then be wiped on to kitchen paper and disposed of, or simply rinsed away. This routine should be repeated every **three to four days for two weeks** so that any lice emerging from the eggs are removed before they can spread.

**Given that head lice do not lay eggs until about a week after they have hatched, it follows that removing the live lice regularly will result in lice-free children in a fortnight.**

Re-infection can, of course, occur if head-to-head contact is subsequently made with someone with head lice.

Bug buster kits, containing instruction leaflets, five combs (a detangler comb and combs for removing baby and adult live and empty shells) and a plastic cape, are re-usable, and are available from some local chemists or from

Community Hygiene Concern

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Advice helpline: 01908 561928 chc.org