



## Grant County Health Department

111 South Jefferson Street, Floor 2  
Lancaster, Wisconsin 53813-1672

[www.co.grant.wi.gov](http://www.co.grant.wi.gov)

Phone: (608) 723-6416 • Fax: (608) 723-6501

Dear Parents,

On examination at school, your child has been found to have head lice and/or nits. The following is the treatment schedule to use to rid your family and home of head lice and/or nits.

Several non-prescription shampoos are on the market to eliminate lice and their nits (eggs). They are available at Walmart, K-Mart, Shopko or your local drugstore.

All persons in the household should be examined for the presence of lice or nits. This is done by parting the hair in small sections with a comb looking for bite marks, redness or small tear shaped white specks resembling dandruff. These are the nits or eggs. The nits are usually found about 1/4 to 2 inch from the scalp. They glue themselves onto the hair shaft and cannot be easily removed. The louse is a small flat, wingless, brownish-gray creature with stubby antennas and six legs each ending in a sharp, curved claw. The louse can be seen with the naked eye. If any family members are found to have lice or nits they should also be treated with the anti-lice shampoo. This check should take 15 minutes or more and must be done in good light.

### FACTS ABOUT HEAD LICE

- What does head lice look like? Since adult lice are the size of a sesame seed (2-3mm), head lice can be seen by the human eye. They live in human hair, draw blood from the skin, and lay eggs (called nits) on the hair shaft. Live nits are found less than 1/2 inch from the scalp and most often on hair at the back of the head in the neck region. Some children with lice complain of itchiness but many have no symptoms.

- Is your child at risk? Yes, Head lice will spread as long as children play together. They spread almost completely through human hair to hair contact, and pets do not spread lice. Anyone can get head lice. Children in child care, preschools, elementary or middle schools are at risk. Head lice are NOT a sign of being dirty. Head lice are not dangerous and DO NOT spread diseases.

- What can you do? Parents are the key to looking for and treating head lice! The Wisconsin Department of Public Health advises parents to spend 15 minutes each week on each child carefully looking for head lice or nits. Persons with nits within 1/4 inch of the scalp OR live lice should be treated. Careful use of a nit comb can potentially remove all lice. Each child should have his or her own comb or brush. Teach your child NOT to share hats, scarves, brushes, combs, and hair fasteners.

### TREATMENT PLAN FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS:

1. Thoroughly screen all household members and inform any of the child=s close contacts regarding exposure, i.e. friends, overnight guests, relatives, sports team (especially those teams sharing helmets and caps) and all other possible outside contacts.
2. Use a safe lice-killing treatment that is effective such as RID, Nix or Pronto which are available over the counter without a prescription.

☐ Lice-killing treatments may not be 100% effective in killing nits and lice. Nits often survive, hatch, and re-infest the child and others. The remaining nits will hatch within seven days. Therefore, a second treatment may be necessary. **Read and follow label directions**. Pay particular attention to the amount of time recommended for the lice-killing treatment to be left on the hair and scalp. The lice-killing treatment should *not* be used on a regular basis or as a preventative measure.

☐ Itching may occur after treatment due to scalp irritation.

☐ Consult a health care provider if the child or family members are pregnant, nursing, under two years of age, have open wounds on their scalp or neck, have known allergies or if eyebrows and eyelashes are infested. These precautions apply to the persons administering treatment as well as those receiving the treatment.

☐ **Regular shampoo and conditioner daily for two weeks, followed by tooth wet combing assures success in eliminating lice, efforts to comb out the nits are necessary to help eliminate lice.**

### 3. 14 Day Treatment Guidelines

√ The treatment days are scheduled to interrupt the lifecycle of the insect. A nit comb should be used to comb the hair and can be bought at most pharmacies.

√ Day 1: use an over-the-counter medicated head-lice shampoo containing pyrethrin or permethrin. Read and follow all directions on the shampoo.

√ Day 2: COMB hair carefully for 15 minutes from the scalp to the end of the hair. Do not wash hair today.

√ Day 3 – 9: Wash the hair using your regular shampoo. Rinse, Apply hair conditioner to make the hair slippery. COMB the hair the entire length from the scalp to end of hair. Wipe the comb between each stroke with a paper towel, which removes any lice or nits. Keep hair wet while combing. COMB all hair for at least 15 minutes.

√ Day 10: Use an over-the-counter medicated head-lice shampoo. (to kill any lice that hatched since the previous medication use) Read and follow all directions on the shampoo.

✓ Day 11: COMB hair carefully for at least 15 minutes from the scalp to the end of the hair. Do not wash hair today.

✓ Day 12-14: Wash the hair using regular shampoo. Rinse. Apply hair conditioner to make the hair slippery. COMB the hair the entire length from the scalp to the end of hair. Wipe the comb between each stroke with a paper towel, which removes any lice or nits. Keep hair wet while combing. COMB all hair for at least 15 minutes.

**NOTE:** *This is a very time consuming procedure. Depending on the length of your child's hair, this process may take several hours, over several days.*

Nits and lice that are removed from the head should be placed in a sealed plastic bag for the outside trash. Do not drop them on the floor.

**The most important effort is the daily shampoo, conditioner and wet combing technique described in # 2 above.**

4. Assure that the child's personal belongings are machine washed in hot soapy water and dried on high heat for 20 minutes (i.e. hats, caps, bed linens and clothing).

5. Combs and brushes should be soaked in hot soapy water.

6. Dry cleaning of some articles such as dolls, teddy bears if able or seal in plastic bag for 14 days.

☐ Environmental lice sprays are generally not effective and **not** recommended.

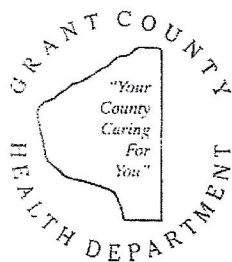
☐ Pets do not carry human head lice, therefore, spraying pets is unnecessary since head lice need human blood to survive.

7. Screen your child daily after an infestation for 2 weeks then weekly throughout the entire school year.

Treatment Calendar:

\_\_\_\_ Day 1 Medicated Shampoo  
\_\_\_\_ Day 2 COMB only DO NOT WASH  
\_\_\_\_ Day 3 Shampoo, condition and COMB  
\_\_\_\_ Day 4 Shampoo, condition and COMB  
\_\_\_\_ Day 5 Shampoo, condition and COMB  
\_\_\_\_ Day 6 Shampoo, condition and COMB  
\_\_\_\_ Day 7 Shampoo, condition and COMB  
\_\_\_\_ Day 8 Shampoo, condition and COMB  
\_\_\_\_ Day 9 Shampoo, condition and COMB  
\_\_\_\_ Day 10 Medicated Shampoo  
\_\_\_\_ Day 11 COMB only DO NOT WASH  
\_\_\_\_ Day 12 Shampoo, condition and COMB  
\_\_\_\_ Day 13 Shampoo, condition and COMB





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### ALTERNATIVE HEAD LICE TREATMENTS

#### *Natural and Non-Toxic (Two week process)*

1. Apply agent to suffocate crawling lice. Consider use of Crisco (easy to remove). Vaseline (difficult to remove), and real mayonnaise (not lite or low fat) applications. Product should remain on the hair for a minimum of two hours (a shower cap or stocking cap may be helpful). Lice can be removed by regular shampooing, conditioner/cream rinse application and fine tooth combing while hair remains wet.
2. Efforts to comb out nits or eggs attached to the hair shaft with a "nit comb" will reduce the risk of treatment failure.
3. Repeat daily shampoos followed by conditioner for two weeks. Fine tooth combing to remove nits and lice.
4. Haircuts facilitate this process.

To avoid re-infestation instruct all family members to avoid borrowing personal items: combs, brushes, hats, towels or clothing from each other or from friends. It is best for everyone to use only their own personal articles, both at home and at school.

Head lice can be eliminated in your home if they are detected, treated and controlled early.

GRANT COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Staff Nurses