

What do head lice look like?

- tiny, flat insects, have no wings
- cannot jump or fly
- live and breed on human hair only
- 1-2 mm long, greyish brown in colour, hard to see

Nits

- 1 adult female can produce many eggs called nits
- half the size of a pinhead
- oval in shape
- look like dandruff "pearl coloured eggs, shaped like teardrops"
- firmly glued to hair, can't be flicked off

How do they spread?

- direct head-to-head contact with an infested person
- lice crawl quickly from one person's head to another and multiply quickly

What are the signs?

- itching of the scalp, look for:
 - crawling lice in the hair
 - nits attached to the hair near the scalp
 - scratch marks on the scalp or back of the neck or hairline

First Treatment

- treat only when lice or nits are present
- speak to a pharmacist to find the right product

Follow directions carefully

- **all** close personal or household contacts should be checked.
- TREAT **all** infested persons at the same time.
- Check 24-48 hours after treatment for presence of live lice – if lice are detected, consult pharmacist.

Pregnant Women and Infants

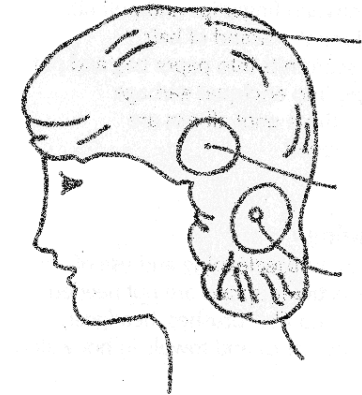
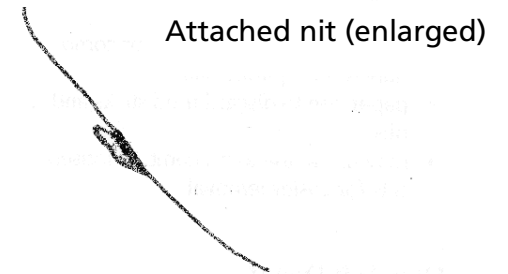
Infants, children under 2 years, pregnant and lactating women must seek doctor's advice before treatment.

Second Treatment

- Necessary to kill any newly hatched lice before they lay eggs
- Follow package directions exactly
- after 2nd treatment check for head lice twice a week for four weeks

Nit Removal

Removal of dead nits after treatment for reasons of appearance may make it easier to see any new infestations.



Nits are commonly found around ears and nape of neck, lie close to scalp.

Nit Removal - cont.:

What's Needed?

- bright natural light
- a chair
- wooden sticks, toothpicks or comb handle to separate hair
- paper bag to discard used sticks and nits
- may use a fine tooth comb to loosen nits for easier removal

How Is It Done?

- back comb small sections of hair with fine tooth comb to loosen nits
- pull off loosened nits by grasping between fingertips and pull nits along the strand of hair
- discard nits into paper bag and put bag into enclosed garbage
- continue until all nits are removed

Cleaning

- extra housecleaning and use of insecticide sprays are not needed
- wash combs, brushes, headgear, pillow cases and towels in hot water

Points To Remember

- an untreated source among close contacts is a common reason for reoccurrence
- head lice live only on humans, not on dogs, cats etc.
- discourage children from sharing hats, scarves, combs, hair accessories and helmets
- keeping hair short will not prevent head lice
- check young school age children regularly for head lice; more often if there is an outbreak
- notify the school/daycare if your child has lice

For More Information Call:

Thunder Bay District Health Unit
999 Balmoral Street
Thunder Bay, Ontario P7B 6E7
Phone: 625-5972

Schreiber
824-2413

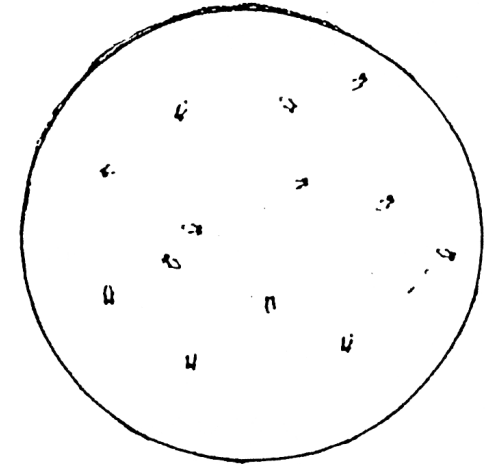
Geraldton Marathon
854-0454 229-1820

Manitouwadge Nipigon
826-4061 887-3031

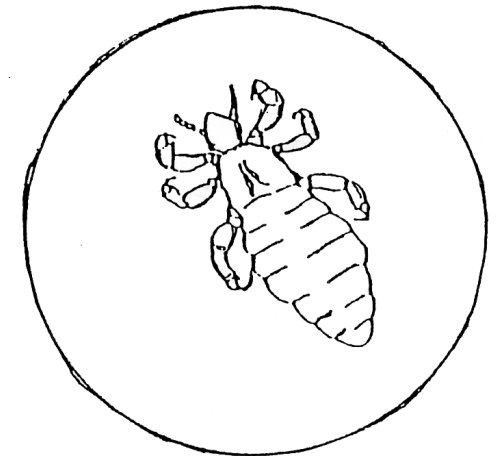


December 2009

HEAD LICE



Head Lice – actual size



Magnified head louse

A NUISANCE, NOT

A HEALTH HAZARD