

CAUTIONS

Always seek advice from a healthcare professional before using medicated head lice lotions on the following groups.

- ◇ Young babies (under six months old)
- ◇ Pregnant women
- ◇ People with asthma or allergies

Pregnant women are advised to use either wet combing or 4% dimeticone lotion, which is licensed for use in pregnancy and breastfeeding.

Always read the instructions carefully before using medicated head lice lotions.

REMEMBER

Prevention is better than cure. Check hair at least once a week if head lice are a problem in your area.

Further Information

This leaflet gives general information. If you require further details and advice about effective combing methods please contact one of the following:

- ◇ Health Visitor
- ◇ School Nurse
- ◇ Practice Nurse / GP Pharmacist

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If you don't know who to ask... ask us!

Telephone: 0800 542 02 02

(Mon – Fri 9am to 5pm.

Answer machine at all other times)

Direct line: 01452 427362

Email: familyinfo@gloucestershire.gov.uk



Family Information Service—Gloucestershire



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Family Information Service

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Glosfamilies Directory

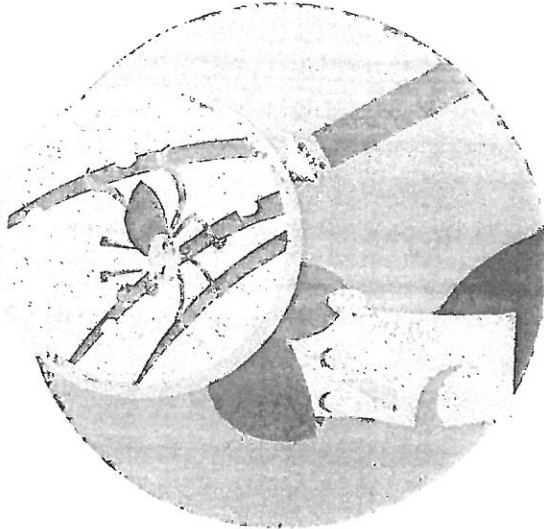
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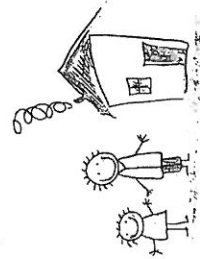
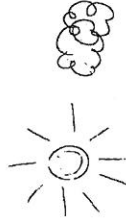
Gloucestershire
COUNTY COUNCIL

The Prevention and Treatment of

Head Lice



**CHECK THEM
TREAT THEM
BEAT THEM**



Family Information Service

www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk

Like the common cold anyone can catch head lice. It is a community problem that affects adults and children.

WHAT ARE HEAD LICE?

Head lice are flat greyish-brown insects, the size of a pinhead, which live in the hair. They like to stay close to the scalp for warmth and feed by biting the scalp and sucking blood.

WHAT ARE NITS?

Nits are empty white egg cases. They are not always a sign of live head lice and grow out with the hair.

DETECTION AND PREVENTION

You only have head lice if you see live lice in the hair. Lice are most easily detected by fine tooth combing wet conditioned hair. If no lice can be found by careful combing of the hair from the roots then there is no need to consider applying head lice lotions/liquids.

WHEN TO COMB

Wet comb and check hair regularly—once a week. There may be no itching to warn you that head lice are present. It is very important for everyone to check regularly. Remember—check at least once a week.



HOW TO COMB

WET COMBING METHOD

Head lice may be detected by this method. If it is done correctly head lice may be cleared over a 2—6 week period.

- ◇ Wash hair in normal way with an ordinary shampoo.
- ◇ Use a hair conditioner and while hair is wet comb through from roots, using ordinary comb to detangle hair and then use fine tooth comb.

OR

- ◇ Use a light oil e.g. olive oil or grape oil on dry hair and comb through from roots.
- ◇ Light oils or conditioner makes combing easier, they do not kill lice.

- ◇ Systematically part hair and ensure teeth of comb slot into hair at the roots with every stroke, ensuring the comb goes into the nape of the neck and behind the ears.
- ◇ Comb hair over a pale sheet or paper, white towel or pillowcase if possible so you can see any lice.
- ◇ Clear the comb of lice between each stroke by wiping on a tissue or rinsing under running water.
- ◇ If you find any lice, then repeat this routine every 2—3 days for 2—6 weeks so that any lice emerging from the eggs are removed before they can spread or reproduce. This will only work if carried out exactly as described.

TREATMENT

If you find live lice you have two options.

1. WET COMBING METHOD

On hair washed and conditioned or on dry hair to which a light oil has been applied as described.

2. USE INSECTICIDAL LOTIONS.

Pesticide shampoo can be used, although some people are concerned about harmful side-effects and head lice in the UK are becoming resistant to chemical treatments. If you wish to use a pesticide shampoo, talk to your chemist or health professional about the most suitable one and follow the instructions as you may need to repeat the treatment.

WHICHEVER TREATMENT IS USED

- ◇ Check the heads of all the family and close contacts and treat using one of the two options described.
- ◇ Tell all known contacts - e.g. children's friends, grandparents, aunts, uncles, child minders so they can check their hair and treat if necessary.
- ◇ Always continue to comb hair on a regular basis to check for recurrence