

Nuke the Nits!

The mere mention of nits is enough to send most people into an itching and scratching frenzy! As head lice infestations are rife amongst our schools, it pays to be informed on how to fight them. Chances are your child will bring these unwanted little visitors home at some point in their school career.

How will I know my Child has Nits?

- They will most likely be scratching uncontrollably! Look for scratch marks, particularly on the nape of the neck.
- You may be lucky enough to see the little critters – adult lice are about the size of a sesame seed, are a grayish-brown colour and move fast!
- Eggs are easier to see and found cemented to the hair shaft around 1.5cm from the scalp. They are the size of a pinhead and range from brown to white in colour. Nit eggs are a lot harder to dislodge than dandruff or dry skin.
- If you can't see eggs or lice but suspect an infestation, you can use the **Wet Combing Method**. No lice will escape undetected! Wet hair and coat thoroughly with conditioner. Conditioner temporarily stuns head lice. Comb through hair with a fine-toothed comb, specific for nits. Wipe comb on tissue and examine for lice or eggs. Repeat until entire head had been combed through 5 times.

I've Found Nits! What Next?

- They need to be treated ASAP to avoid sharing these lovely critters with friends and family members
- Ensure hair is completely dry before treatment
- Completely coat hair in chosen treatment product from root to tip
- After specified time period (according to pack) comb through with your trusty nit comb and ensure all lice are dead. If they are still alive, the lice are resistant to that particular ingredient and another product should be tried.
- Rinse and shampoo treatment out.
- Most treatments don't kill 100% of eggs. Lice can start laying eggs 6 days after they hatch so re-treat on days 5 and 10 (after initial treatment) to break their life-cycle.
- As extra insurance and to prevent spread to friends and family members, use the **Wet Combing Method** in between treatments. This will catch and remove lice as they hatch. Usually every second day will suffice.
- If you find adult lice while wet combing or on the 2nd and 3rd treatment, they are being re-infested from another source.....

Prevention is better than Cure

- To avoid the rigmarole of treatment discourage your child from sharing hats, hair ties and brushes.. Tie long hair in a bun or plaits and use a daily prevention spray
- Check your child's hair weekly using the **Wet Combing Method** to nip any potential infestations in the bud

Common Myths Debunked

- Head lice don't jump – they need head to head contact
- You don't need to go on a washing and cleaning frenzy. Head lice only survive for short periods away from a blood supply – i.e. your child's head.!



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