

## Facts about head lice:

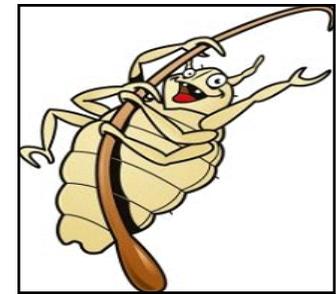
- They are pin head size when they hatch and less than match head size when fully grown and difficult to see in hair.
- Eggs are glued individually to hairs near the scalp. Unhatched eggs are dull in colour and hard to see, but after they have hatched the empty sacs (nits) are white and easy to see.
- They do not necessarily cause itching straight away or may not cause any itching and often only 10 lice or less are on a head.
- A rash may appear at the nape of the neck.
- Head lice can't fly, jump or swim. They spread from person to person by climbing swiftly along hairs during close head to head contact.
- Head lice are equally fond of clean or dirty hair.



You can seek more advice from your health visitor, pharmacist or doctor about the best treatment for your family. Also the School Nurses can offer advice which is available at Conway Road Health Centre (Tel No: 0161 973 1151 ) between 9-10 a.m. and 4-5 p.m.

# Leaflet on ...

## Head Lice



**Head lice** are small six-legged wingless insects that like to live on the hair close to the scalp where it is warm. They are not fussy about hair length and they like all hair types.



Children are most commonly affected by head lice because they tend to have more head-to-head contact during play. Head lice are most common in children between 4 to 11 years old, although anyone with hair can catch them.

### Prevention.

Thorough brushing or combing of hair at least twice a day, especially at bedtime can help prevent the survival of the lice, as any newly acquired head lice will be damaged. Also the wet combing method can help which is shown in this leaflet.

Provide your child with their own brush and comb and encourage them **not** to share them with others.

### Detection.

Detection combing can be performed on dry and wet hair, but wet combing is more accurate because lice remain motionless when wet.



### Wet combing.

1. Shampoo, rinse and apply lots of conditioner to hair. Use a wide-toothed comb to untangle.
2. Once untangled, section the hair and comb with a fine-toothed detection comb from root to end. Comb one section at a time paying attention to the back of the neck and the ears.
3. Check the comb for live lice between each stroke and remove them.
4. When hair has been combed through and checked, rinse off the conditioner.

If you discover head lice check the whole family.

### Treatment.

There are two treatment options. One is using the wet combing method described opposite, and the other is to use insecticide lotion. The treatment is available on prescription from the doctor or purchased from the pharmacy. Please check which treatment is best for you especially if you are asthmatic or suffer from allergies, you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

### Lotions.

Treatment is 2 applications of lotion 7 days apart.

- **Do not use** a lotion unless you find a living, moving louse. Head lice may become resistant to lotions if they are used too often.
- If live head lice are still found after two treatments ask your doctor, pharmacist or school nurse for advice.
- Follow the instructions on the packet carefully. The treatment method may vary between different lotions.
- Treatment does not prevent infections.