

HEAD LICE



DESCRIPTION

Head Lice are very small, about 2 – 3 mm, but vary in size. They are wingless and range in color from dirty white to grayish black. They move quickly, so they are difficult to spot.

HABITS

Contrary to popular belief, poor hygiene does not cause head lice. Head lice cannot jump or fly, so they are most commonly spread through head-to-head contact. Lice can be spread by sharing personal objects such as pillows, bedding, hair brushes, combs, scarves, caps, barrettes, hair ribbons, etc. Head lice occur on the head. They are most commonly found

above the ears and on the back of the scalp, less often on the scalp. Lice are rarely found on other body hair. Head lice cannot be spread to pets. Lice can only survive up to 48 hours without being on a host.

CONTROL

Check and treat all household members at the same time. Prescribed or over the counter shampoo treatments are typical therapy. Follow and read label instructions before using. Two or more treatments may be required. Because of secondary infestations of the skin caused from scratching, an antibiotic therapy may also be required. Use a fine-tooth comb after regular shampooing every 2-3 days for 2 weeks. Wetting the hair beforehand is recommended because it temporarily immobilizes the lice and they are easier to comb out. Wash all bed linens, clothing and plush toys in very hot water then put them in the very hottest dryer cycle for at least 20 mins. Items that can't be washed can be dry cleaned or put into airtight bags for 2 weeks. Vacuum carpets and any upholstered furniture in the home and vehicle. Soak hair-care items (brushes, combs, head bands, hair ties, etc.) in rubbing alcohol or medicated shampoo for 1 hour. You can also wash them in hot water or just throw them away in a sealed bag.