

# WET COMBING

## HOW TO GET RID OF HEAD LICE

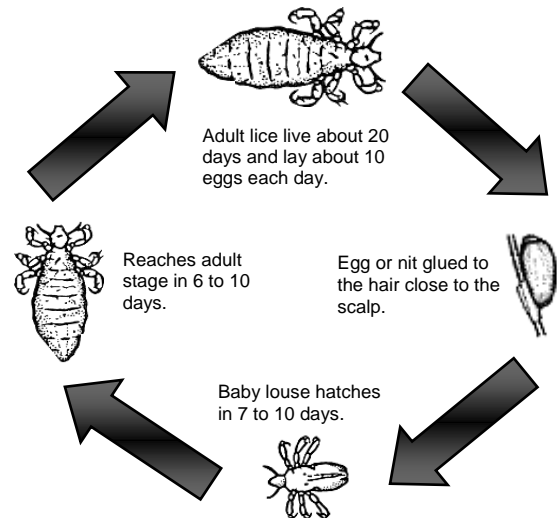
### HEAD LICE FACTS:

- ◆ Lice are tiny insects about the size of a sesame seed.
- ◆ Anyone with hair can get head lice.
- ◆ Lice do not have wings and cannot fly or jump.
- ◆ Lice move quickly in dry hair and this makes them hard to see.
- ◆ Lice can only stay alive on the head and will only lay eggs on the head.
- ◆ Having head lice does not always make the scalp itchy.
- ◆ Lice move to other heads when heads touch and by sharing brushes and combs.
- ◆ Lice are common where children play or work closely together.

### MORE HEAD LICE FACTS:

- ◆ Adult lice live about 20 days and lay about 10 eggs each day.
- ◆ Lice eggs are called nits and are glued to the hair near the scalp.
- ◆ It takes about 7 to 10 days for the lice eggs to hatch.
- ◆ Once a lice egg has hatched, the empty eggshell stays stuck to the hair.
- ◆ If you find an eggshell more than half an inch away from the scalp, it is most likely empty.
- ◆ The eggshells are white and look like dandruff but cannot be brushed or blown away.

### LIFECYCLE OF THE HEAD LOUSE



### WHEN TO CHECK:

- ◆ **Regularly ONCE A WEEK after shampooing**
- ◆ If you receive a note home from your school or daycare about lice
- ◆ If your child's playmates have head lice
- ◆ When school vacations end
- ◆ When a person is scratching his or her head more than usual

### WHAT YOU NEED:

- ◆ Shampoo and white-coloured conditioner (low-priced is fine)
- ◆ Wide-tooth comb to untangle hair
- ◆ Towels and paper towels
- ◆ Lice comb - we recommend a comb called a "**Bug Busting**" comb. It has very fine teeth that make it easier to remove lice.
- ◆ Contact your local health unit to find out where you can purchase a "Bug Busting" comb.

## IF YOU FIND LICE:

- ◆ Clean combs and hairbrushes in hot soapy water.
- ◆ Clean the combs, towels and other supplies that you used for checking for lice in hot soapy water.
- ◆ You **DO NOT** need to spend time cleaning the house.

Use this chart to keep track of the days (shaded areas) that you need to comb and condition.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----	----	----	----	----

## HOW TO CHECK FOR LICE:



1. Wash and rinse hair.
2. Put enough conditioner on the hair to cover the whole scalp (usually about 2 handfuls).
3. Use a wide-toothed comb to get tangles out.
4. Begin combing the head carefully with the "Bug Busting" lice comb. While you are combing over the head, do not lift the teeth of the comb away from the scalp.
5. Checking can be done with the head forward over the sink combing from the back of the head to the front, or from a sitting position going from the front of the head to the back.
6. Pull the comb through the hair in one stroke. If the comb tugs, add more conditioner.
7. After each stroke, wipe the comb on a paper towel and look for lice.
8. Make sure to comb the entire head, checking for lice after each stroke.

## TREATMENT (IF YOU FIND LICE):

1. With the conditioner still on, keep the teeth of the lice comb next to the scalp and carefully pull the comb through the entire length of hair.
2. Comb the whole head section by section.
3. After each stroke, rinse the comb in warm water. Check the comb for lice before you pull it through the hair again to make sure you do not put lice back onto the head.
4. Keep combing until you find no more lice.
5. Rinse the hair to remove conditioner. Leave the hair wet.
6. Untangle the hair with a wide-tooth comb to take out the knots.
7. Comb the whole head again with a lice comb, rinsing the comb after each stroke to make sure there are no more lice.
8. Keep repeating the steps **every 4 days** for a full **two weeks** to make sure that new lice are removed as the nits or eggs hatch.
9. Use these steps to check for head lice on everyone living in your household.

## **For more information, contact your local Health Unit:**

**Esquimalt**  
☎ 250-519-5311

**Peninsula**  
☎ 250-544-2400

**Victoria**  
☎ 250-388-2200

**West Shore**  
☎ 250-519-3490

**Outer Gulf Islands**  
☎ Toll Free 250-539-3099

**Saanich**  
☎ 250-519-5100

**Sooke**  
☎ 250-642-5464

**Salt Spring Island**  
☎ 250-538-4880