

Safe kids Healthy kids Happy kids

Super-Lice Could Be a Problem for Children

Researchers report lice, called super-lice, resist prescribed and over-the-counter medicines. Over treating, treating multiple times and using lice treatment to prevent lice may be the cause.

Millions of children age 3 – 11 get head lice each year. Some say the numbers are actually higher. Parents and health workers may miss the signs of head lice.



Under diagnosis of head lice is a problem. It means lice have a better chance to spread to others. However, over diagnosis is also a problem. *An itchy scalp does not always mean a child has lice.*

Head lice are not dangerous. They do not spread disease, and they are not a sign of uncleanliness. Head lice affect kids of all income levels. However, head lice often cause hysteria. This over-reaction can lead to over-treatment. It can also lead to missed school days.

Parents should only treat head lice when a child has active head lice. Some experts believe that you should treat a person who shares the same bed with a child with active lice. If one child has head lice, the parent should check all household members for lice and nits. You should treat everyone who has lice or nits. Treat all infested people at the same time.

Tips to Treat Lice

- Use only one head lice medication at a time.
- Follow the medicated shampoo directions - carefully. Read the directions at least 3 times before you apply the shampoo.
- Do not use a creme rinse, shampoo with conditioner, or conditioner before using a lice medicated shampoo.
- The lice medication works for 1-2 days after you rinse it out of your hair. Do not re-wash hair during this time.
- Put on clean clothing after treatment.
- After 8 – 12 hours, comb out any dead or remaining lice. Use a fine-toothed comb called a nit comb.
- If after 8 – 12 hours you find no dead lice or the lice seem as active as before treatment, call your doctor. You might need a different medicine.
- Every 2 – 3 days, use a nit comb to remove nits and lice. Do this until you find no nits and lice.
- Most prescription or over-the-counter drugs tell you to retreat after 9 – 10 days. If you use Malathion, you should not retreat unless you find crawling lice. Call your doctor before retreating, especially if you used Malathion.

 For more information on treating head lice, log onto:

- www.cdc.gov/lice/head/treatment.html
- www.kidshealth.com type in head lice
- www.parenthelpline.org, (select School Children)

Brought to you by Parent Help Line and St. John's Children's Hospital



Call the Parent Help Line. Help is just a phone call away.
1-217-544-5808 or 1-888-727-5889, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., 7 days a week
www.parenthelpline.org

