

Guidelines on how to treat head lice

Our school guidelines are based on the Dutch health authorities (GGD and RIVM) most recent information sent to schools:

- Head lice are very common parasites among young children and their families.
- Head lice lay about eight nits a day!
- Head lice cannot jump.
- There's nothing to be embarrassed or ashamed about having head lice.
- Having head lice has nothing to do with good or bad personal hygiene.
- Head lice can live 1-1½ months and in that time lay about 250 eggs (nits).

Treatment of head lice:

- Use a special comb (such as either the Nisska comb or the Nitcomb ML2 to comb through your child's hair.
- **The GGD recommendation is that you comb your child's hair twice daily for 2 weeks.**
- Treatment is successful if no more nits are found after 2 weeks.
- To facilitate the combing, we recommend using conditioner to soften the hair.

This is how it should be done:

- First wet your child's hair thoroughly
- Protect the eyes with a facecloth
- Massage some conditioner through the hair and comb using a normal comb to remove knots
- Use the special lice comb and start combing the hair away from the scalp
- Start combing at one ear and work your way to the other ear
- Make sure all hair is thoroughly combed
- After every comb through, wipe the comb with a paper napkin or tissue
- Rinse the conditioner from the hair
- Wash the comb with soap and water

Information about head lice products

- ❖ Conventional lotions, creams and shampoos that kill live lice are available at pharmacies and drugstores.
- ❖ Prioderm® lotion and Loxazol® lotion poison the lice but do contain harsh chemicals which lice are becoming more resistant to.
- ❖ There are also the natural alternatives: XT Luis® and XT Luis- Once® which encapsulate and smother the lice therefore not leading to the build-up of immunity such as can happen with the chemical lotions.

- ❖ It is important to note that all lotions only kill live lice. Nits must be combed out or manually removed twice a day for 2 weeks.

Useful tips

1. Once a week check all family members' hair for live lice and nits using a comb.
2. If you find any lice or nits please contact the school office.
3. If your child is treated straight away, they can attend school as usual. Please think of reminding them to avoid direct head-to-head contact with other children!

Further information

- www.rivm.nl/infectieziekten Dutch site
- www.onceaweektakeapeek.com UK site
- GGD Gooi & Vechtstreek: Afdeling Jeugdgezondheidszorg, Postbus 514, 1200 AM Hilversum, Tel: 035 692 63 50