

## 2. ENVIRONMENT

- Reinfestation will occur if the problem is not addressed at the environment level.
- All items that have come in contact with the infested individual have to be washed in hot water. The heat of the water or the hot cycle in the dryer will kill any live nits or lice.
- Anything that cannot be washed have to be dry cleaned or placed in a plastic bag, sealed, and left for 14 days. They can also be frozen for 48-72 hours. This will ensure that the lice or nits are no longer living. Depending on the type of lice, sealing times may vary.
- Combs, hairbrushes, and hair accessories should be cleaned in hot water or a pediculicide for 5-10 minutes.
- Lice will die after 1-2 days off the host and nits that hatch away from a host will die within a few hours if no new host is found.

## DETECTION

There are 3 methods:

1. Dampen hair, bend over a plain sheet of paper, and comb hair with a fine tooth comb. Look to see if any lice have dropped to the paper.
2. Tap head with a piece of transparent tape; lice will stick to the tape.
3. Apply white conditioner to dry hair covering from root to tip and comb with a head lice comb. Wipe comb into tissue paper and look for lice. Remove the conditioner before applying treatment.

Special care must be paid to hand hygiene as it is the best way to prevent the spread of germs.

### GOOD HAND HYGIENE INCLUDES:

#### Alcohol-Based Hand Rub

1. Apply to palm of one hand.
2. Rub hands together, covering all of hands and fingers.
3. Rub until hands feel dry.

#### Hand Washing

1. Remove all jewelry.
2. Use warm running water and soap.
3. Spend at least **15-30** seconds lathering and washing hands.
4. Rub hands together, paying attention to fingertips, between the fingers, and thumbs.
5. Rinse thoroughly.
6. Dry with paper towel and turn off tap with paper towel.
7. Dispose of paper towel in the garbage.

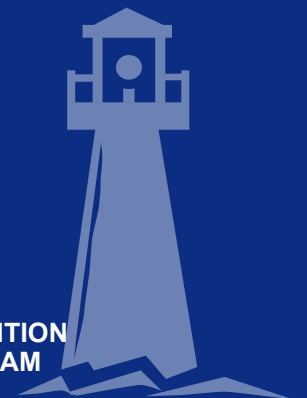
**IT'S OK TO ASK NURSES, DOCTORS, AND OTHER HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS IF THEY HAVE CLEANED THEIR HANDS.**

**REMINDE VISITORS TO CLEAN THEIR HANDS.**

## PEDICULOSIS (LICE) MANAGEMENT

*Information for Clients, Residents,  
Families, and Visitors*

**IF VISITING PLEASE CHECK WITH  
NURSE BEFORE ENTERING  
CLIENT'S ROOM**



## **WHAT ARE LICE?**

- Lice are parasitic insects that can be found on your head and body including the pubic area.
- Lice found on different parts of the body are different from each other and only the body lice is known to spread disease.
- Lice survive by feeding on human blood.

## **WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF LICE?**

- The presence of a live louse.
- Identification of nits on the hair shaft.
- Tickling feeling of something crawling in your hair.
- Some people may have an allergic reaction 1-2 weeks after infestation.
- Soreness and crusting from scratching that can result in an infection or swelling.

## **WHO CAN GET LICE?**

- Anyone can get it under suitable conditions of exposure. It is not a sign of bad personal hygiene.
- It can affect any age, sex, race, or socio-economic level. No one is immune.
- Worldwide, head lice is more common in children.

## **HOW IS LICE SPREAD?**

- Lice are spread most commonly by direct person-to-person contact.
- It is commonly spread in families due to sharing of personal items such as brushes and combs and close personal contact.
- Lice can crawl from one individual in close contact with another. They cannot hop or fly.
- Lice can also spread indirectly by sharing personal belongings like hats and hair accessories.
- A head louse will not usually crawl from it's preferred place of warmth on the scalp.
- Dogs, cats, and other pets do not play a role in transmission of human lice.

## **HOW LONG CAN YOU SPREAD LICE?**

- As long as lice or viable eggs remain alive on the infested head.
- Lice that fall off the head will die within 20-48 hours without blood to feed on.
- Nits (eggs) will not hatch off the head because they require the warmth and humidity.
- Lice can survive 24-hours immersed in water.

## **HOW TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF LICE**

- All household contact and contacts should be examined and treated at the same time if infestation is discovered.
- Individuals should not share or use another's hat, comb, or brush.
- Once lice have been found and treated there should be periodic checks of the infested area to ensure no other lice have hatched.

## **WHAT IS THE TREATMENT FOR LICE?**

Treatment may involve 2 approaches:

### **1. MEDICATION**

- A special cream rinse or shampoo can be used. (NIX, Kwellada-P, or a Pyrethrin product).
- This will need to be applied 7-10 days after the first treatment. If there are living lice on the scalp 24-hours or more after treatment, immediate re-treatment is recommended with a different product.
- Although safe when used correctly they can be potentially toxic when used incorrectly.
- Anyone with skin conditions or convulsive disorders should first speak to their physician.
- If you are pregnant or breastfeeding, you should wear waterproof (rubber, latex, etc.) gloves when providing the treatment.