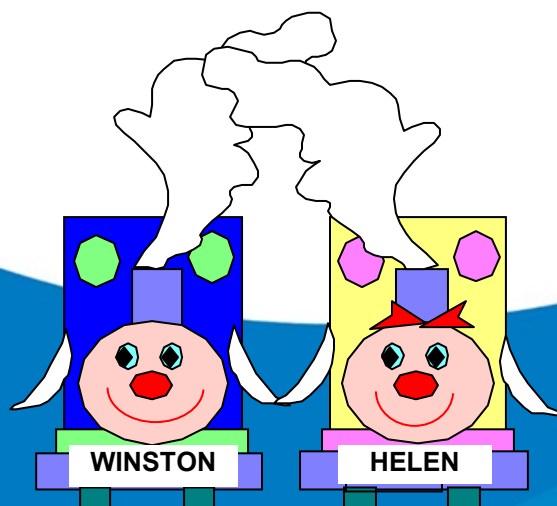


Head Lice

This leaflet can be made available
in alternative languages / formats on request.

*如有需要，本传单可提供其他语言/版式
此單張的其他語言/格式版本可按要求提供*

Na żądanie ta ulotka może zostać udostępniona
w innych językach/formatach.



What are head lice and how do they affect us?

Head lice are tiny grey/brown insects about the size of a sesame seed. Head lice cling to hairs, but stay close to the scalp, which they feed off.

They lay eggs which hatch after 7-10 days. It takes about 10 days for a newly hatched louse to grow to an adult and start to lay eggs.

Head lice are common in children, but can affect anyone at any age. They are **not** a sign of dirty hair or poor hygiene. Close hair-to-hair contact is usually needed to pass the lice on. Head lice cannot jump or fly, but walk from one head to another.

Most people with head lice do not have any symptoms. An itchy scalp occurs in 1 in 3 cases. This is due to an allergy to the lice, **not** due to them biting.

Head lice are difficult to find just by looking into the hair. If you suspect head lice, it is best to do '**detection combing**'.

Some people advise that you do this to children's hair regularly, about once a week.

Detection combing: Use a fine toothed comb bought from a pharmacy/chemist.

Slot the comb into the hair as near to the scalp as possible then draw the comb to the tips of the hair. Check the comb for lice after each stroke.

Our usual form of treatment

You can buy various lotions or cream rinses which kills lice, from pharmacies or chemists. Head lice shampoo does not work very well and is not recommended.

The lotions come in water or alcohol bases. The alcohol lotions are usually slightly better.

Alcohol based lotions should not be used with children who have asthma, eczema or broken skin.

Follow all instructions on the product you are using carefully.

Treatment is usually reapplied after 7 days.

Detection combing is recommended every 4 days for at least 4 sessions e.g. a two week period.

Risks and discomforts of the treatment

Treatments are usually safe providing you follow the manufacturer's advice on the product.

Slight itching of the scalp may occur after application of lotions, depending on which one is used.

A full list of side effects will be on individual product labels.

Please read these instructions carefully.

The alcohol based lotions are also inflammable so it is important to keep children away from fires, cigarettes, flames etc. whilst the lotion is on the hair.

Alternative treatment

- Treatment has to be carried out to remove all lice or they will multiply.
- Family members of affected children should also carry out detection combing and treat their own hair if lice are found.
- Head lice can be very troublesome; therefore if everyone takes responsibility for the regular checking of their children's hair the problem can be significantly reduced.
- Your Health Visitor or School Nurse can give individual advice on difficult cases.

It is important to consult your GP for specialist advice if you have any skin condition or asthma.

If you have any further questions, please contact your child's consultant via their secretary via the hospital switchboard.

The secretaries are available Monday to Friday, 9.00 am to 5.00 pm

If you need to contact the department outside of these hours, please phone either:

Ward 3F 0151 430 1616

Ward 4F 0151 430 1791

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