

adult louse



nit  
(attached at an angle to a single hair close to the scalp)



glass and good light will make the job easier. Sometimes, small white specks in the hair such as dandruff or droplets of hair spray can be confused with nits. Try removing the specks from the hair base. Dandruff or hair spray will come off easily -- the nits will be very difficult to remove.

## HOW can I get rid of the lice?

Once lice are found, quick action at home and at school will be needed to prevent them from spreading to others. Leon County Schools has a "No-Nit" Policy. It requires that children with head lice be sent home right away for treatment. The policy also requires that children may not return to school until they have been treated and no lice or nits remain to be seen on the hairs.

Treatment is quite easy. You can consult your doctor if you wish, or you can get one of the special head lice shampoos that are available at drug and grocery stores or the Leon County Health Department. Re-treatment is needed 7-10 days later. Once the shampoo is used according to the directions, the dead lice

and nits will need to be removed with a special comb (most of the head lice shampoos come with a nit comb in the box). Place nits on wet paper towel and dispose of them by placing them into a sealed plastic bag, placing the sealed bag into an outside garbage container.

In addition to treating your child's head, you will need to treat your child's personal items, and your home. You will also want to check other family members for signs of infestation as well and treat them if they are infested. Begin by washing your child's personal items (hats, combs, hair accessories, and clothing) and linens with very hot (131 degrees) water for 20 minutes and dry in a hot cycle dryer. Remember, nits that may have fallen off the head can live for

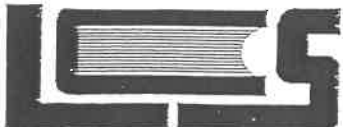


nearly 10 days on household surfaces or personal items. If an item can't be washed, have it dry-cleaned. If it can't be washed or dry-cleaned, seal it in a plastic bag for at least 14 days to be sure the nits are dead. Vacuum your home and car completely and dispose of the vacuum bag in a sealed bag in your outside garbage can. Avoid physical contact with infested individuals and their belongings--especially bedding and clothing. Doing all of these things greatly reduces the possibility of the lice returning again in a few weeks. But it's not a guarantee, so regularly rechecking your family is highly recommended.



Your child can return to school as soon as all the lice and nits are removed. Proof of treatment (shampoo box or doctor's certification) is needed when your child returns to school. It's best to return with your child to school as they will be re-checked for nits before they may rejoin their class. Rest assured that while you're doing your part at home, the school will be screening and rescreening other children and taking extra precautions to minimize contact and stem the possibility of spreading the infestation.

For additional information on head lice, contact your school nurse by calling your school directly or by calling the Leon County Health Department at 487-3186. You can also contact Leon County Schools' Health Services Office at 487-6380.



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