

WET DETECTION COMBING

Correct diagnosis is essential. The only reliable method of diagnosing current, active infection is by wet detection combing.

A diagnosis of head louse infection cannot be made with certainty (no matter how many nits are present, how many reported cases there are in a school, how bad the itch is, or however dirty the pillows are) unless a living, moving louse is found.

Wet Detection Combing - how to do it

You will need: A plastic detection comb
Good lighting
An ordinary comb

- 1** Wash the hair well, then dry it with a towel. The hair should be damp, not dripping.
- 2** Make sure there is good light. Daylight is best.
- 3** Comb the hair with an ordinary comb.
- 4** Start with the teeth of the detection comb touching the skin of the scalp at the top of the head.
- 5** Draw the detection comb carefully towards the edge of the hair keeping the teeth of the comb in contact with the scalp for as long as possible.
- 6** Look carefully at the teeth of the comb in good light.
- 7** Repeat this several times from the top of the head to the edge of the hair in all directions, working around the head and looking at the detection comb after each action.
- 8** Do this for several minutes. It takes 10 to 15 minutes to do it properly for each head.
- 9** If there are head lice, you will find one or more lice on the teeth of the detection comb.
- 10** If you find something but are not sure what it is, stick it to a piece of paper with clear sticky tape and show it to your school nurse or family doctor. There can be other things in the hair which are not lice.
- 11** Clean the detection comb carefully under a running tap. A nail brush helps to do this.
- 12** **Do not treat unless you are sure that you have found a living, moving louse. If you need help, ask your local chemist, health visitor, school nurse or family doctor.**

HEADLICE

The following guidance aims to assist you in effectively treating head lice:

- Wet detection combing is the most effective method to detect headlice (see overleaf).
- Only those individuals who have head lice should be treated - not the whole family.
- *Effective treatment equals two applications of the chosen insecticide a week apart* as one application does not always eradicate all the eggs.
- As lice live close to the scalp where they feed, an insecticide should be applied mainly to the scalp.
- Lice may take up to 24 hours to die following treatment.
- To ensure that the individual does not become re-infected with head lice, all close contacts should be checked using the wet combing method and treated if live lice are found.
- If you suspect treatment has not been effective, do not repeat without consulting a health professional.
- This guidance supersedes that contained with the product.

Your GP, Pharmacist, Practice Nurse, School Nurse or Health Visitor will be able to provide you with further advice on any of the above.