



MID-JERSEY PEDIATRICS

www.midjerseypeds.com

**33 Brunswick Woods Drive
East Brunswick, NJ 08816
(732) 257-4330**

**25 Kilmer Drive
Building #3, Suite 107
Morganville, NJ 07751
(732) 972-6888**

HEAD LICE

What Are They?

Lice are small visible insects that live in scalp hair, although occasionally they can inhabit eyebrows, beards and other hairy areas. They grow in little white-gray round eggs called "nits" which are attached to the base of hairs. The nits may be mistaken for dandruff but they do not flake off the way dandruff does

How Do You Get Lice?

Lice are spread from one person to another via:

- Direct contact
- Personal items such as combs, brushes, towels, pillowcases
- Clothing: hats, scarves, ribbons. etc.
- It can happen to anyone, but is most common in children who play in close contact with each other.

What Are The Symptoms and Signs?

- Visualization of the tiny gray adult lice or the nit on hair and scalp--especially at back of the head and behind the ears.
- Head scratching, scalp itching.
- Red rash on nape (back) of neck.
- Swollen lymph glands near the ears.

How Do You Get Rid Of Lice?

Contact our office, or if you're not sure of the diagnosis make an appointment with the nurse. There are various over-the-counter shampoos available. We will recommend one of those. (One application is usually sufficient to kill both the lice and the eggs). Follow application instructions closely and don't forget to comb out the nits with a special fine tooth comb (usually included in the shampoo box). You may need to loosen the nits by applying a solution of half vinegar and half rubbing alcohol or an over the counter cream rinse ("Step 2"). Many schools will not let children back in school if nits are still present.

How To Prevent Recurrence?

- Check all family members' scalps closely and if there is any evidence of infection, treat the same as the index case.
- Notify the school or camp so that close contacts there can be identified and treated.
- Clothing, towels, bed linens should be washed in very hot, soapy water or dry cleaned.
- Combs, brushes and similar items also should be soaked in hot water (at least 130° F) for 5-10 minutes.
- Thoroughly vacuum carpets, mattresses and upholstery.
- Items that cannot be washed can be placed in plastic bags for 2 weeks.