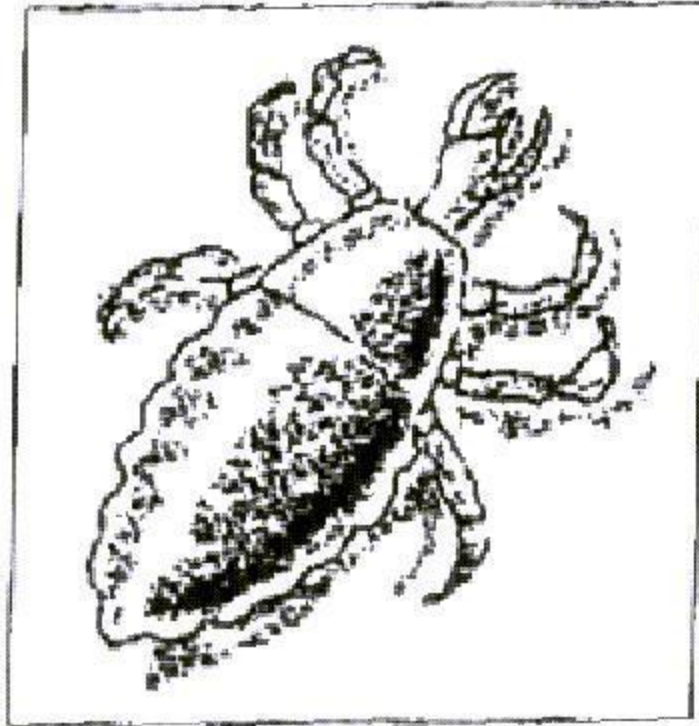

HEAD LICE: Detection, Treatment, and Prevention

Information for parents



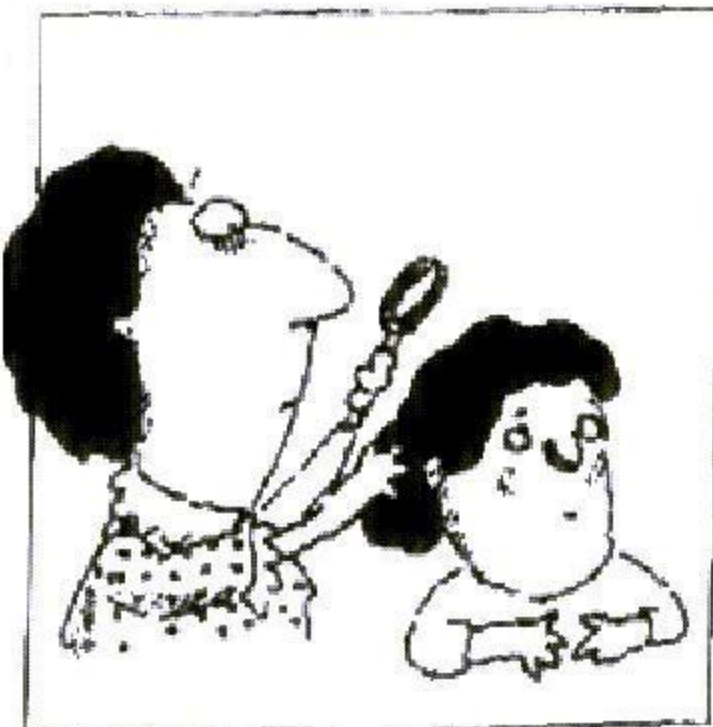
WHAT ARE HEAD LICE?

Head lice are tiny, wingless, greyish-tan insects that live and breed in human hair. The eggs, called nits, are easier to see than the lice themselves and are usually found attached to hair shafts close to the scalp behind the ears and on the back of the head. Nits cannot be washed away like dirt or dandruff; they must be removed with a special comb designed for that purpose. Head lice can only survive for about half a day without a human host and cannot live on family pets.



HOW DO THEY SPREAD?

Head lice are very contagious. They are spread through the sharing of personal items such as combs, brushes, scarves, hats, headphones, sleeping bags, and stuffed animals. To minimize the risk of repeated outbreaks, remind your children not to share these items.



HOW ARE THEY DETECTED?

The first clue that a child has head lice is frequent scratching of the scalp. To check for infestation, carefully examine the hair around the back of the neck and behind the ears. Since head lice shy away from light, you may only see their eggs (nits), small whitish ovals of uniform size attached to the hair shaft.



HOW ARE THEY TREATED?

Head lice infestation can be treated with a head lice medication, called a pediculicide. There are several pediculicides on the market, and they come in a variety of forms: shampoo, creme rinse, and lotion. Look for a treatment that kills the nits as well as the lice and offers protection from reinfestation.