

BENEFIT NEWS

WVCH: Back to School and Lice

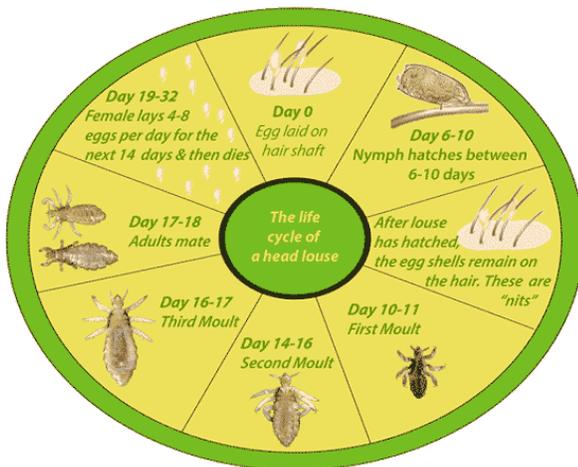
September 1, 2018

Back to School and Lice

With school coming back into session lice is a hot topic & concern. The stigma associated with lice infestations can be harmful to children and adults socially. It is important to note that lice typically like clean hair, which seems to be a comforting point to most parents.

Treatment is available both OTC (over the counter) and by prescription.

Lice Cycle



Female lice can live for 3 to 4 weeks and once mature will lay 10 eggs per day. The eggs are attached to the base of the hair shaft and are camouflaged to match the host's hair color. The eggs typically hatch in 8 to 9 days but depend on the ambient climate. The

hatched louse takes 9 to 12 days to reach adult stage. Therefore if not treated properly the cycle will repeat itself about every 3 weeks.

Non-Pharmacological Interventions

There are many alternatives to pharmacological treatments that do not have much data to determine the efficacy or success rate however we highlight them as they are commonly used alternatives and patients may have tried these therapies before seeking provider help.

Essential oils: One study that was done with HairClean 1-2-3 which contains anise, ylang-ylang, coconut oils and isopropyl alcohol showed it was just as effective as permethrin. (*Barker et al. BMC Dermatol. 2010;10(10):6*)

Occlusive agents: petrolatum/Vaseline, mayo, butter, margarine, herbal oils, olive oil or coconut oil are used to suffocate the lice.

Desiccations: AirAlle; a treatment done at Lice Clinics of America

Other agents: Highly flammable agents intended for animals are never a good ideal for human use

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According to the CDC only those with an active infestation should be treated.

All household members and close contacts should be checked, but not treated unless there is evidence of an active infestation. While treating infestation it is recommended that hats, scarves, pillow cases, bedding, clothing and towels (used by the infested persons) should be washed in hot water and dried with hot cycle of dryer to kill off any lice that may be in those items. Lice and eggs are killed by exposing them for 5 minutes to temperatures of greater than 130 ° F. Items that cannot be laundered should be dry cleaned or sealed in a plastic bag for two weeks.

Furniture and floors should be vacuumed to remove hairs that might have viable nits attached. Lice do not survive long if they are not attached to a person so it is not necessary to spend a lot of time cleaning as it will not affect the risk of re-infestation. Shaving the head is usually not necessary as it may expose the child or adult to undue social stress and does not change the ability to remove the lice and eggs.

Pharmacological Lice Treatments

Product	Application	Success rate	Reapplication	Side effects	Prescription/cost
Nix (permethrin 1%)	Apply to wet, clean hair, leave on for 10 minutes then rinse	Almost 100% with reapplication	In 7 to 10 days	Pruritus, erythema and edema	OTC/ \$21
Rid (pyrethrins + piperonyl butoxide)	Apply to dry hair, leave on for 10 mins then rinse	Almost 100% with reapplication	In 7 to 10 days	Allergic reaction (<i>allergy to chrysanthemum or rag weed</i>), puritis	OTC/ \$12
Ovide (malathion 0.5%)	Apply to dry hair, allow to dry naturally, leave on for 8-12 hours then rinse	100% due to ovicidal/ pediculicidal activity	No reapplication	It is very flammable so no dryers or heat while on patient's head	Prescription and for ≥ 6 yo/ \$170
Ulsefia (benzyl peroxide 5%)	Apply to dry hair and saturate scalp all the way to the tips of the hair leave on for 10 minutes then rinse	75% with reapplication	Must reapply in 7 to 10 days	Pruritus, erythema, pyoderma, ocular irritation	Prescription for ≥ 6 months/ \$350
Natroba (Spinosad 0.9%)	Apply to dry hair saturating scalp all the way to the tips of hair leave on for 10 minutes then rinse	85% with reapplication	Reapply in 7 days if live lice are still present	Erythema, ocular erythema, site irritation	Prescription for ≥ 6 months/ \$280
Sklice (Ivermectin 0.5%)	Apply to dry hair and scalp leave on for 10 minutes then rinse	95% with one application	No reapplication	Skin or eye irritations, erythema, burning or dryness	Prescription for ≥ 6 months/ \$320

*Nix and Rid and it's generic alternatives are on the WVCH formulary without restrictions. Ulsefia requires a PA and the other items are not on the formulary.

**All topical pediculicides should be rinsed from the hair over a sink rather than a shower or bath to limit skin exposure and with warm water not hot water to minimize absorption due to vasodilation.