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HEAD LICE

Head lice are small tan or tan/black insects approximately 5mm (1/4 inch) in length. They live on the human head/scalp and they lay eggs close to the scalp. The eggs are very small, about the size of the eye of a needle, and are gray or white in color. The eggs are usually found on the hair shaft and cannot be brushed away.

The most common sign of head lice is itching of the head or neck. When checking your child for head lice, look for crawling lice in the hair, eggs (called nits) stuck to the hair, and scratch marks on the scalp or back of neck at the hairline.

TREATMENT

From the Apotheke, lice shampoo: INFECTO PEDICUL (by Infectopharm) or APAR FORTE or one of two new brands called HEDRIN or NYDA as directed.

Recommendations from the Lice control center in Vienna: if you use APAR FORTE, leave on the hair for 45 minutes; Use of 80% fat Mayonnaise on the hair, leave on for one hour after use of APAR FORTE will condition the hair and smother any leftover live nits).

You will also need a fine tooth comb (Straub Kamm) for combing the hair after washing. A comb is usually included with the shampoo package, but the metal lice combs available at the Apotheke are best.

Important Tip: The comb does not remove nits; they must be manually removed. Children should be checked again 7-10 days after treatment, as the eggs usually only survive for 7 days.

After treatment and before returning to school, children should send a letter to the nurse from the lice treatment center or a physician stating that they are lice free.

HOUSE CLEANING PROCEDURE

If you have head lice at home, all clothing and bedding used in the 48-hour period before treatment should be washed in hot water and dried in a hot clothes dryer for at least 20 minutes. Objects that cannot be washed (such as stuffed toys, pillows, coats) should be stored in a plastic bag for 10 days.

All furniture, carpets, mattresses, and floors need to be vacuumed. Also, all hair combs, brushes and hair clips need to be soaked in hot water (60-70 °C) for 10 minutes. Cloth hair bands should be placed in a plastic bag for 10 days also, if they cannot be washed.

Head lice are spread by direct contact with an infected person or object infected with the lice. This includes sharing hats, combs, brushes, scarves, jackets, blankets, sheets, pillowcases etc. Head lice have also been spread through contact with cloth covered seats on planes, trains and buses that are not cleaned between passengers. Some have noted that use of hair gel, mousse, or conditioner is thought to deter lice infection. Washing hair with vinegar is also a commonly used deterrent.

FEELING INSECURE ABOUT HOME TREATMENT?

The city of Vienna has a lice treatment center as part of its city health services. The center is newly renovated, bright, with child-oriented decor and most importantly staffed by lice treatment experts. The cost is approximately 23-34 Euro (based on hair length).

Hygiene Center Vienna:

Hygienezentrum der Stadt Wien, MA 15 - Gesundheitsdienst der Stadt Wien
Rappachgasse 40, 1110 Wien

https://www.wien.gv.at/sozialinfo/content/de/10/InstitutionDetail.do?it_1=2097352

Opening Hours: Mon-Fri: 7:00 a.m. – 12:30 a.m.

ATTENTION: MONDAY AND FRIDAY BY APPOINTMENT ONLY

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