

# Lice Prevention

Take these steps to help prevent and control the spread of head lice:

- Avoid head-to-head (hair-to-hair) contact during play and other activities at home, school, and elsewhere (sports activities, playground, slumber parties, camp).
- Do not share clothing such as hats, scarves, coats, sports uniforms, hair ribbons, or barrettes.
- Do not share combs, brushes, or towels. Disinfest combs and brushes used by an infested person by soaking them in hot water (at least 130°F) for 5 – 10 minutes.
- Do not lie on beds, couches, pillows, carpets, or stuffed animals that have recently been in contact with a person infested with head lice.
- Machine wash and dry clothing, towels, bed linens, and other items that a person infested with lice wore or used during the two days before treatment. Use the hot water (130°F) laundry cycle and the high heat drying cycle. If you can't wash or dry clean items, seal them in a plastic bag and store them for two weeks.
- Vacuum the floor and furniture, particularly where the infested person sat or lay. However, spending much time and money on house cleaning activities is not necessary to avoid reinfestation by lice or nits that may have fallen off the head or crawled onto furniture or clothing.
- Do not use fumigant sprays or fogs; they are not necessary to control head lice and can be toxic if inhaled or absorbed through the skin.

To help control a head lice outbreak in a community, school, or camp, teach children to avoid activities that may spread head lice. For example, teach children to

- Avoid hair-to-hair contact during play.
- Not to share clothing such as hats, hair ribbons, barrettes, scarves, coats, or sports uniforms.
- Not to share combs, brushes, or towels.