

# Pediculosis (Head Lice)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Your child has been in contact with pediculosis (head lice) at school. A case has been reported in his/her class.

## What is it?

- It is commonly found in most schools and daycare centers
- It is found in all social classes – rich and poor
- It is often seen in the autumn with the return to classes
- It is found as much in clean hair as it is in dirty hair
- It is resistant to regular shampooing
- It is caused by an unpleasant parasite that does not transmit any disease

## How is it transmitted?

- It is transmitted from one person to another by direct head to head contact
- Transmission via personal objects (hats, pillowcases, combs and brushes) is very rare
- There is no evidence of transmission via a sofa, carpets, bed linens, eyeglasses, headphones, etc.

## What is lice?

It is an insect as big as the head of a needle, grey in colour, has no wings:

- Lives near the root of the hair
- Is nourished by human blood
- The female can lay up to 10 eggs (nits) per day
- They have a lifespan of one month
- They can survive 24 to 36 hours outside the human body.

## What is a nit?

- It is an egg, opaque and whitish-grey in colour that resembles dandruff
- It sticks to the hair and stays close to the root of the hair
- Each nit is a potential louse, therefore hatching of lice could occur within 4 to 10 days
- After one treatment, the empty nits (dead) are pale and more transparent. At this point, it is not contagious
- Dead or alive, all nits must be removed

## How can it be prevented?

- Remember that itchiness is one of the first symptoms.
- There are often people who have no symptoms.
- Regularly examine your child's hair, as well as other family members.
- Pay particular attention to the back of the head and the area behind the ears. Good lighting and a magnifying glass could help.