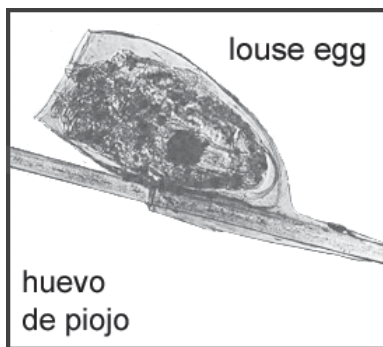


# Head Lice Fact Sheet — No.3

## What should I do if I think my child has head lice?

1. You can take care of your child's head lice problem at home without a visit to the doctor or clinic. Treatment should be with shampoo or cream rinse approved by the FDA that can be purchased without a prescription at the drug store, grocery store or other places that carry drug store products.
2. Many parents feel embarrassed when their child has lice. Sometimes it helps to talk to someone who can offer extra help. The nurse at your child's school, your physician and even the pharmacist can help. Neighborhood, city or county health clinics may provide trained, helpful professionals. Contact your area Department of State Health Services Public Health Region for suggestions. See Fact Sheet #6 for Regional offices or go to [www.dshs.state.tx.us/regions/default.shtm](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/regions/default.shtm) for the listing.



3. After the first treatment, you may not see live lice but you might see nits. If the nits (or lice eggs) are attached to strands of hair  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch or less from the scalp, they are probably not dead. This means live lice could still be living somewhere on your child's head; or, soon will hatch from the remaining eggs.
4. That's why, after treatment, it is important to comb out the nits left in your child's hair with a special nit comb available to pick up where you buy lice treatment.
5. Nits are very tiny; about the size of a knot in a thread. They are shaped like a long football, yellow to white in color and are often mistaken for dandruff or hair spray droplets. They attach to a hair at the scalp with a waterproof, cement-like substance. That's why they can be difficult to remove.
6. You may find nits first on the hairs at the "nape" of the neck (back of the head where the hair stops and the neck begins) and behind the ears. But, they can live anywhere; so, look all over the scalp.
7. A second treatment and then a second combing are necessary. Even after thoroughly using the nit comb, live lice or nits could still be hiding somewhere on your child's head. All products specifically created to treat head lice will recommend a second treatment anywhere from 7 to 10 days after the first treatment in order to kill any remaining or newly hatched lice.