Head Lice Oil Treatment

1. Saturate the hair with oil, especially near the scalp. (Mineral oil, cooking oil, or olive oil will all work.)
2. Cover head with shower cap to keep oil off furniture.
    a. For young children – the elastic edged bowl covers come in smaller sizes. (Can be bought at a dollar store)
3. Leave oil on head for 1 – 2 hours. (You will be removing the lice with the lice comb and rinsing them down the drain, so it is not necessary that they are completely dead)
4. Then blot hair and comb out snarls.
5. Use Lice comb to comb out the lice and eggs. Comb from scalp to ends of hair. (Sit near the sink so you can rinse the comb frequently)
    a. You will need a long toothed metal lice comb, the plastic ones do not work well.
    b. These can be purchased at any drug store or at the Health Department (cost $3)
6. Comb through all the areas of the head.
7. When you are no longer combing out lice (and you have combed all areas the head), shampoo the hair to remove the oil. Dish detergent like Dawn or Joy work best.
8. Let the hair dry (or dry with a dryer).
    a. New studies published in the Journal of American Pediatrics show that using concentrated hot air is effective in killing lice eggs and preventing them from hatching.
    b. The use of a standard blow dryer or bonnet type hair dryer for 30 minutes is recommended.
    c. To use a standard blow dryer, the hair must be sectioned and the hot air aimed at the scalp for 30 seconds for each section. **(Minimum of 20 sections, you need to cover all areas of head.)**

The method was not found to be very effective on live lice, but very effective at killing the nits (eggs).

    d. This treatment alone will not get rid of lice, but has shown to be an effective *aid* to assist in getting rid of lice.
9. Then separate the hair as if for a permanent, and comb through each section, checking close to the scalp for eggs (nits). See back of this sheet.
10. Comb through dry hair (with head lice comb) each day for the next 3 weeks, checking the comb for signs of live lice.
    a. If you have missed any eggs they will hatch in 7 – 10 days.
    b. They need another 7 – 10 days to mature and start laying more eggs.
11. If you find any live lice, do the oil treatment again, following the above steps.
12. After 3 weeks, you should be lice and egg free.
13. The lice comb can be used to screen for head lice once a week, by simply combing the hair with it and watching for live lice. Catching it early makes it easier to treat!

See the Head Lice information sheet for instructions on cleaning the environment.
Clean lice comb with warm soapy water and an old toothbrush. You may disinfect it by soaking in rubbing alcohol for a few minutes or simply very hot water. The comb can then be used on more than one family member.