

GLAM AND GRIT: SILENT BATTLE OF LICE IN BEAUTY SALOONS

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ABSTRACT

Head lice are tiny wingless wonders, no larger than a sesame seed, and greyish white in color. They annoy people of all ages but are more common in females than in males. Visiting a salon promises a transformation, but the only real change is an unexpected journey from an unsuspecting client to another who emphasizes the importance of strict hygiene practices. The life cycle is a short but eventful one. Precision is the key in the battle against head lice.

1.Introduction:

Head lice (*Pediculus humanus capitis*), occur worldwide and cause annoyance and can lead to secondary bacterial infection by scratching. To maintain its body temperature, it remains close to the scalp and feeds on blood. Lice cannot jump or fly so transmission occurs through direct contact. The size of the louse is 2-3mm long and is the champion in hide and seek. These tiny creatures are not afraid of water. They go into a state of hibernation in the presence of abundant water like bathing, showering, etc., and are well adapted to “hanging on” when required like in the case of water (1, 2).

Life cycle

Three main stages in a louse development include: egg, nymph, and adult. Eggs, which are tan or brown dots before they hatch. These are often confused with dandruff. These are firmly adhered to hair and will not move from their position. Eggs are white in color hatch in about 8 days. Nymphs are difficult to find since they can move and the size is much smaller than the adult. Nymphs takes 9-10 days to convert into adult. Adult are tan to grayish-white in color and move by crawling. Adult female can lay about 6 eggs each day (3).

Transmission

All the lice infestation cases on man comes directly or indirectly from other persons. Although, transmission of lice in a beauty salon is rare but still it can be transmitted through them. In Pakistan salons neither maintain good hygiene nor sanitize their tools properly so the chances of lice infestation are higher. Transmission can occur through sharing brushes, combs or towels of infested person. As customers enjoy the luxury of being pampered, little do they know that these little actors are attempting a hair-raising performance of their own (4).

Treatment

Various methods are used for the treatment of lice infestation. Such as using physical methods like lice combs, hand picking or shaving entire head. Chemical methods can also be used like 4% dimethicone lotion, lice shampoo, permethrin lotion 1%, taramira /Jamba oil (5).

Control

Maintaining proper hygiene by regular cleaning and sanitizing tools is the best way to control this infestation. If regular sanitization is not possible, use disposable or single used items. Head-to-head contact must be avoided.

Conclusion

Head lice infestation is very common in Pakistan. Head lice are unwanted guests but with proper preventive measures and strategies we can get rid of them very easily. By following this precaution, the head lice will find it difficult to establish their tiny realms and customers can enjoy their pampering without engaging in a silent battle with lice.

References

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