

# Head Lice at School

A guide for Parents

**Presented by Lois Bisson, RN**



# History of Lice

- Head Lice have existed for thousands of years
- Head lice found on Egyptian mummies
- Not many studies done in last 60 years
- Infestation increased worldwide in the past 60 years
- 6 to 12 million people treated yearly for head lice—most of them children between 3-12 years of age



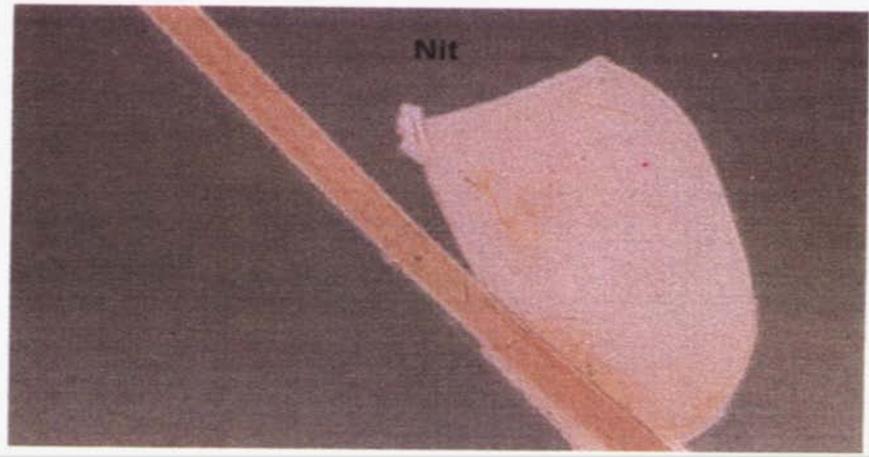
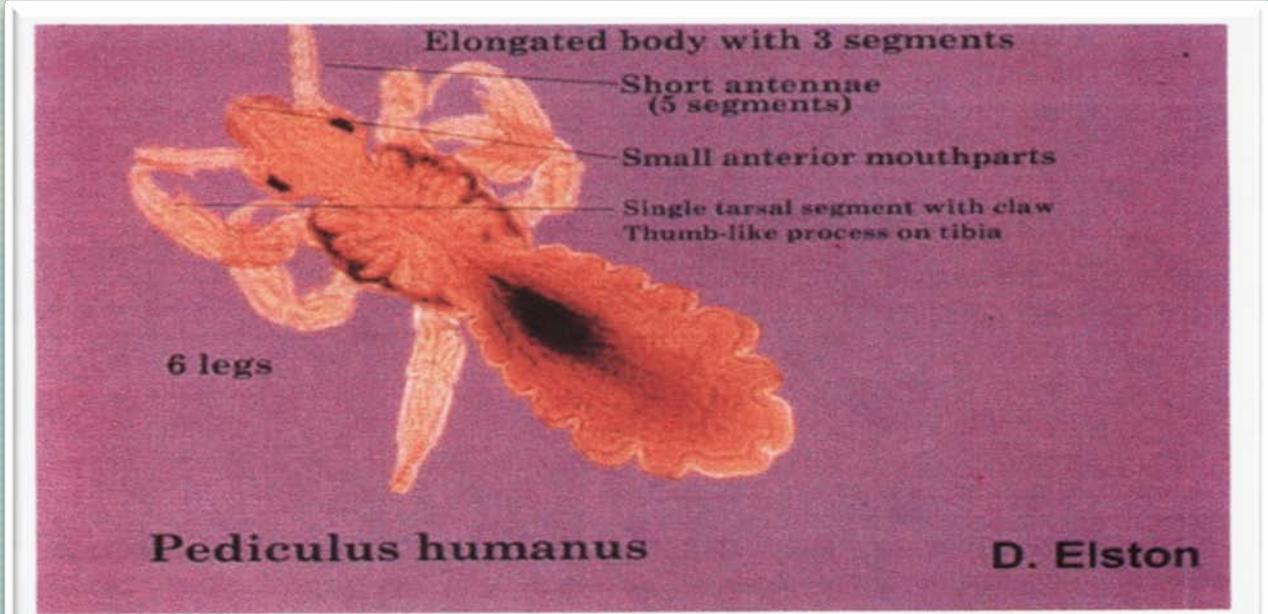
# Biology and Life Cycle

- Adult louse is 2-3mm long (size of sesame seed)
- Color is pale grey, though color can vary
- Female lives 3-4 weeks and lays about 10 eggs/day, usually within one inch of the scalp
- Eggs are called nits—camouflaged with pigments to match hair color!
- Nits cemented to hair shaft, hatch in 10-14 days.



# Adult Louse

- Lice use their “clawed” legs to cling to hair shaft
- Lice can close off their breathing spiracles for hours
- Lice crawl fast—up to one foot per minute
- Lice do not hop, jump or fly



# Should Children with Nits be Allowed at School?

- Amer. Academy of Pediatrics says YES
- National trend supports allowance
- You should be prepared for a change in the near future





# References:

– See notes for references