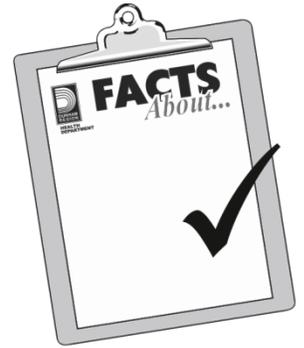




FACTS

About...



HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Pubic Lice (Crabs)

What is it?

Pubic lice (crabs) are usually found on pubic hair but sometimes move to the hair on other parts of the body, such as the head, chest, armpits, eyelashes, beards, and mustaches. Pubic lice live by feeding on human blood. They are small and round but can be seen and are easily recognized.

How is it spread?

Pubic lice are usually spread through sexual contact and are most common in adults. They may be spread by close personal contact or contact with clothing, bed linens, or towels that have been used by an infected person.

What do I look for?

The first symptom of crabs is usually itching in the genital or anal area. Scratching the affected areas can cause skin irritation and inflammation. You may be able to see the crabs or eggs. Small blue spots can appear on the skin where the crab has bitten.

How is it treated?

Non-prescription shampoo, lotion or cream can be purchased at a pharmacy. Use the treatment as directed on the package. If you are pregnant or breast feeding, talk to your health care provider about treatment options. Certain medications may be harmful to the unborn child or baby.

In hot water (54.4 °C), wash all clothing, towels, and bedding used in the last couple of days before treatment. Dry them on the hottest setting possible. Dry cleaning is also effective. Placing items that cannot be washed or dry cleaned in plastic bags for 2 weeks is another option. Bed mattresses and carpets should be vacuumed.

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For more information

Durham Region Health Department

905-666-6241 1-800-841-2729 durham.ca

If you require this information in an accessible format, contact 1-800-841-2729.



All sexual partners who have had contact with an infected person in the month before diagnosis should be tested and treated. If symptoms continue 1 week after treatment, see your health care provider. If you have a partner, you will want to do your treatments at the same time.

How can I protect myself?

The best way to protect against pubic lice is to limit the number of sexual partners. Once a diagnosis of pubic lice is made, it is important to have testing for other sexually transmitted infections that may be present. Don't have sex until you and your partner(s) have all finished your pubic lice treatments, and avoid close, personal contact with people. Don't share clothes or bedding until after you and your partner(s) are totally free of pubic lice and have washed everything properly.

August 15, 2018

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