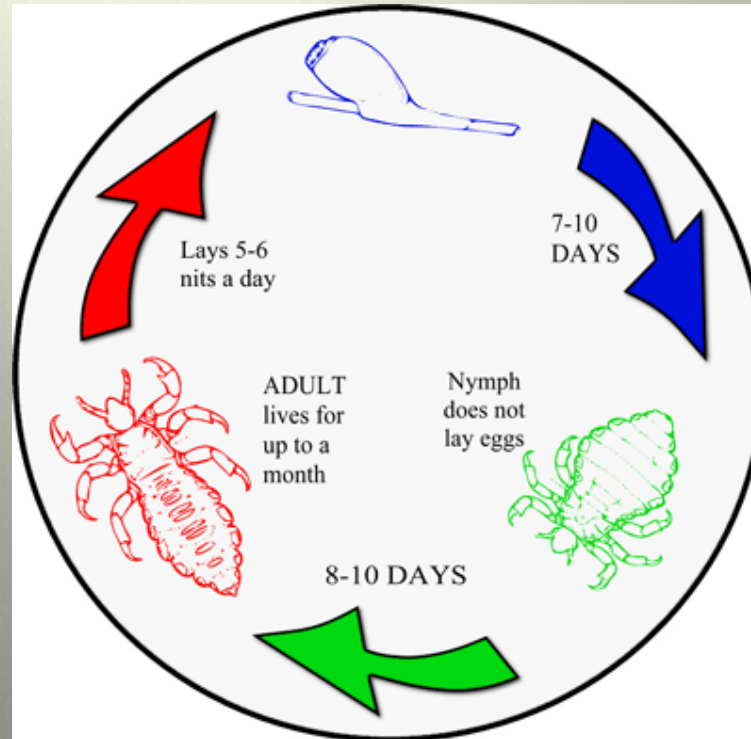


Information on Head Lice



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What are Head Lice?

- Non-harmful, wingless insects
- Live on human heads
- Require blood to live
- Only crawl - do not hop, jump, or fly
- About the size of a sesame seed

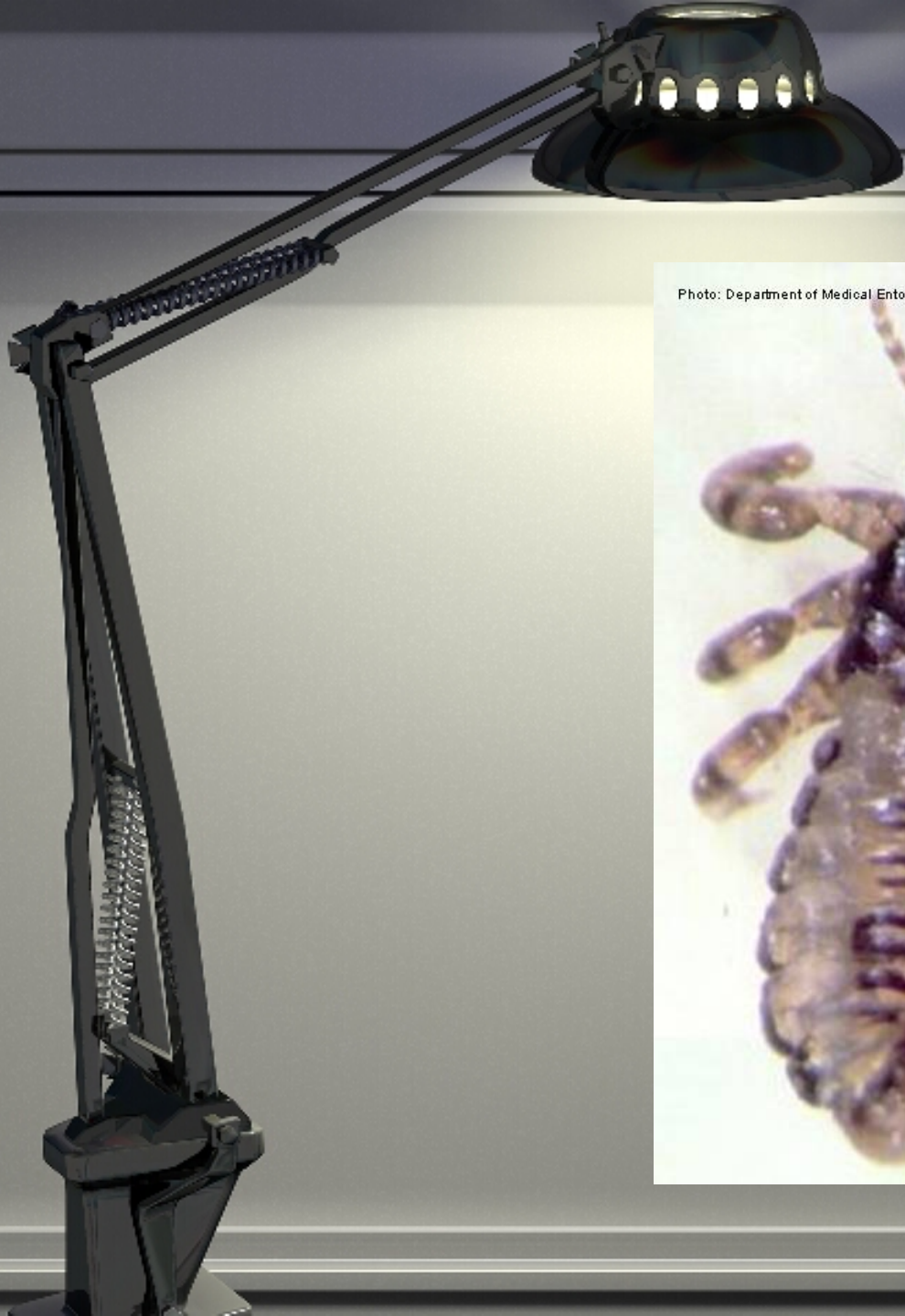
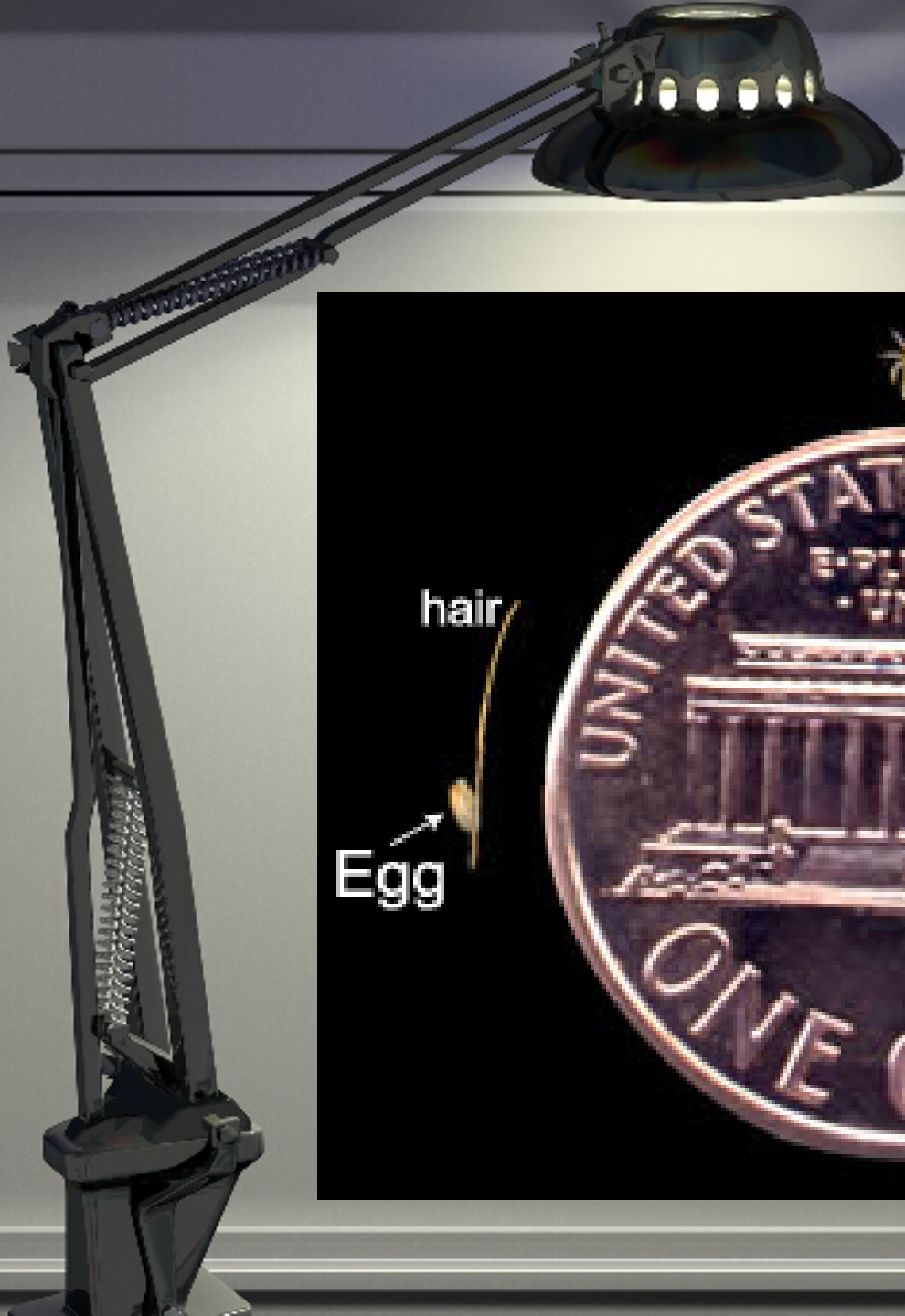


Photo: Department of Medical Entomology, Westmead Hospital

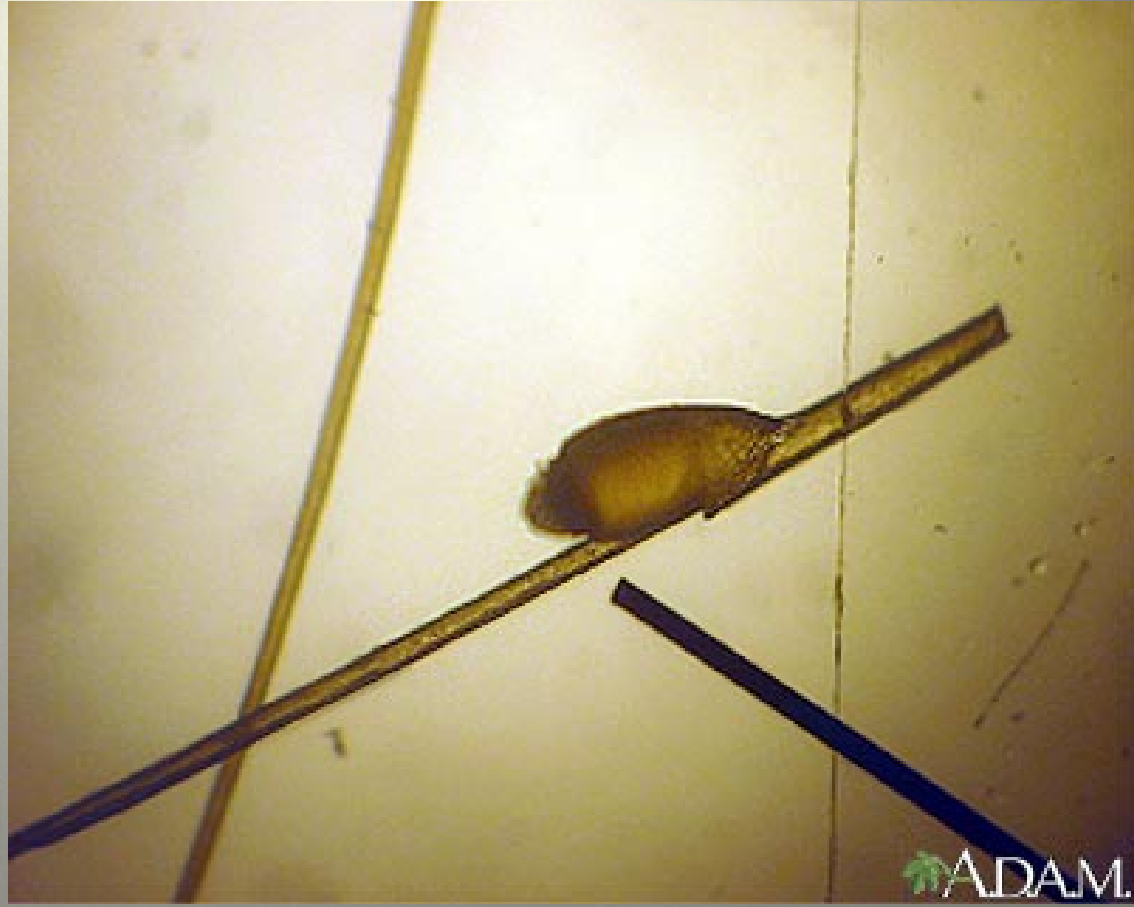






What are Nits?

- Lice eggs
- Smooth, oval-shaped structure
- Attaches to the side of the hair shaft
- Ranges in color from off white to brown
- Always have the same shape - are never irregular, fuzzy, and don't encircle the hair



ADAM



How does Head Lice Spread?

- Direct head contact, mainly head to head
- Sharing combs, brushes, hats, barrettes, headphones, etc.
- Contact with hats, scarves, coats, and other clothing
- Seats on buses, airplanes, movie theaters, etc.



Who Can Get Head Lice?

- Anyone who comes in close contact with someone who has lice
- Children 3-11 and their families are most commonly infested
- Girls get lice more often than boys
- Personal hygiene has nothing to do with getting lice



Helpful Hints to Prevent Head Lice

- Throw coats and hats in the dryer on high heat for 20 mins when your child returns home from play dates, sleepovers, birthday parties, or extra-curricular activities
- Consider bringing a garbage bag to place your child's coat in when they go to birthday parties, dance class, gymnastics, etc. Oftentimes coats get piled on top of one another at these places.
- Keep in mind your child can get lice from many different places such as seats in movie theaters and airplanes, or when trying on clothes, hats, scarves, etc in stores.
- Bring a plastic bag to the movies or on airplanes so your child's head isn't touching the seat
- Be diligent about checking your child's head for lice



Symptoms of Head Lice

- Itching
- Tickling feeling of something crawling in the hair
- Scratch marks or red bite marks behind ears or back of the neck



How to Check for Head Lice

- Seat child in brightly lit room so you can see their head from different angles
- Separate hair into 1 inch sections
- Inspect for live lice and nits
- Live lice may be difficult to see as they crawl away from light
- Nits are found 1/2 inch from scalp
- Most often spotted behind ears and at nape of neck



Steps to Treat Head Lice

- Check every family member for lice and nits
- Treat with lice killing shampoo or other product
- Remove all nits manually or with a lice comb
- Check hair every day for at least 14 days for any missed lice or nits
- Repeat treatment according to directions



What Should Be Cleaned?

- Combs/brushes with prescription shampoo or place in 150° water for 5-10 mins
- All clothing, bedding, towels - dry at hottest temp for 20 mins **daily**
- Vacuum all upholstered furniture, rugs, and car seats **daily**
- Dry clean non-washables and stuffed animals or place in garbage bags for 2 weeks



Ridgewood Public Schools Head Lice Policy

- Mass screenings are not done
- Students must be treated if lice or nits found
- May return once treated
- Head check upon return to school
- We do NOT have a “no nit policy”
- Policy based on American Academy of Pediatrics
- Remember: Checking for lice is a parent responsibility!



What does the AAP Say About Head Lice?

- “Screening for nits alone is not an accurate way of predicting which children will become infested, and screening for live lice has not been proven to have a significant effect on the incidence of head lice in a school community over time.”
- “Several descriptive studies suggest that education of parents in diagnosing and managing head lice may be helpful. Because of the lack of evidence of efficacy, classroom or school-wide screening should be strongly discouraged.”
- “Parents should be encouraged to check their children’s heads for lice if the child is symptomatic; school screenings do not take the place of these more careful checks. It may be helpful for the school nurse or other trained persons to check a student’s head if he or she is demonstrating symptoms.”



What does the AAP Say About Head Lice?

- “No healthy child should be excluded from or allowed to miss school time because of head lice. ‘No nit’ policies for return to school should be discouraged.”



Steps Willard Has Taken

- Coats and backpacks are put in garbage bags in the closets
- Each child has their own set of headphones
- Classroom rugs are vacuumed daily
- Pillows are removed from classrooms
- Lice Bags available through the HSA



Resources

- <http://www.headlice.org>
- <http://www.cdc.gov/lice/head/index.html>
- <http://www.aap.org/healthtopics/skinhealth.cfm>