

DANGERS OF HEAD LICE PESTICIDES

WHY CHILDREN ARE SO SUSCEPTIBLE

The scalp has many blood vessels that are close to the skin, making it easy for toxic substances to be absorbed directly into the blood stream. To make matters worse, children have a less mature immune system to protect them and other enzyme systems to detoxify these chemicals.

Here is what some recognized authorities are saying ...

"Sometimes the medicine is worse than the disease. It is unfortunate that well intentioned parents treating their children with toxic or flammable substances have caused deaths and poisonings." Department of Immunology and Infectious Diseases, Harvard School of Public Health

"There is absolutely no need to expose children to *any* pesticide to treat head lice." Marion Moses MD, *Designer Poisons*

"Panicked parents who would not normally expose their children to potentially hazardous materials will apply pesticides in haste, sometimes well beyond the recommended frequency and dosages." Common Sense Quarterly Report (BIRC), Fall 1998

"Never assume a pesticide is safe. Anything designed to disrupt a living organism-plant or animal-may also prove harmful to humans or other animals in unexpected ways." Theo Colborn, Ph.D., *Our Stolen Future*

"Preparations like Rid and Kwell...are definitely toxic to people." Dr. Andrew Weil, MD, Author of *Ask Dr. Weil, Spontaneous Healing and Eight Weeks to Optimum Health*

THESE CONDITIONS MAKE PESTICIDE EXPOSURE EVEN MORE DANGEROUS

ASTHMA People with asthma can have very severe reactions to pesticides. They can have problems at low levels of exposure that have no apparent effect on people without these conditions, especially children.

EXISTING HEALTH CONDITONS Pesticide exposure can aggravate existing health conditions. Anyone who is already ill, has chronic disease or is taking daily medication can be more at risk from exposure.

ABRASIONS AND BROKEN SKIN People with open cuts, scratches or head and neck inflammation are especially at risk because absorption of the pesticides is greater through broken skin.

MEDICATION Some people taking medications for ulcers, epilepsy, heart disease and other conditions can be affected by pesticides at a much lower exposure level than if they were not

taking them.

LIVER OR KIDNEY PROBLEMS Those with liver or kidney problems may be at greater risk from pesticide exposure.

CHRONIC TOXICITY Pesticides are a potential cause of chronic health effects. This can be from past exposures or continuing low-level exposures and long-term health effects can occur months or years after the exposure.

CANCER IN CHILDREN A child's age at the time of exposure is very important in chronic health effects. Low levels of exposure that seem to have no apparent effect in adults can affect the fetus, infant and pre-pubertal child.

SENSITIZATION Once a person has become sensitized to a chemical, it takes a much smaller amount to cause a future allergic reaction, sometimes not even being able to tolerate the tiniest amount of exposure. If exposure continues, the attacks can come sooner, last longer and become increasingly severe.

TWO TYPES OF PESTICIDES IN TODAY'S HEAD LICE PRODUCTS

There are two main pesticides used in most head lice products available today: lindane and pyrethrins.

LINDANE

For many years, lindane (Kwell), an organ chlorine pesticide available only by prescription, was the treatment of choice for head lice. It is still recommended by many medical personnel who have not taken the time to acquaint themselves with its potential health hazards to humans.

Lindane is absorbed through the skin and into the blood stream. Once absorbed, it can be carried throughout the body to the tissue (mainly fat) and organs. In pregnant women, it can travel across the placenta to the developing fetus. **Due to its toxicity and lack of effectiveness, it should not be used under any circumstance.**

About 9% of each lindane dose is absorbed through the skin. It is 10 times more soluble in brain tissue than in blood. **Routine administration to children and geriatric patients has led to neurotoxin disorders.** Lindane is highly carcinogenic in rats and mice and can cause Aplastic anemia, a precursor or leukemia, and other blood disorders.

In *Designer Poisons*, Marion Moses, MD says **'Lindane should be banned; it should not be allowed for any use whatsoever'**. She also talks about other adverse health effects possibly caused by using lindane to treat head lice:

- ~ Children treated with lindane for head lice compared to those who were not were almost five (5) times more likely to have brain cancer.
- ~ Brain and nervous system damage has resulted in deaths in infants and children after lindane application to the skin.
- ~ Lindane can cause irritant reactions, rashes and allergic reactions with the following

symptoms: convulsions, seizures, headaches, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, tremors, mental confusion and jerky muscular movements.

In *Is This Your Child's World*, Doris Rapp MD states that some women who have elevated levels of lindane from lice treatments in their blood have habitual abortions, unexplained infertility, menstrual disorders and premature menopausal symptoms.

The National Pediculosis Association, Inc. (NPA) says that, "**Lindane is a nerve poison that also causes cancer...so why are we prescribing it for our children?**" Their database has over 500 adverse event reports related to the use of lindane. Even worse, they say it can be unsafe even when used as directed. Children who have been treated repeatedly for head lice may be more at risk of adverse events with additional chemical exposures. Seizures, behavioral changes, attention deficit disorders, cancer, skin disease and even death have been reported to the NPA's registry.

In addition to the NPA, the Consumers Union, the Public Citizens Health Research Group and the Cancer Prevention Coalition have called for a ban on lindane-based shampoos and lotions. Currently it is classified by the US Health Department's Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) as a hazardous substance that contaminates at least 144 Superfund sites (places designated by the EPA as the most hazardous of hazardous waste sites). Eighteen foreign countries have banned its use. This should be sufficient evidence to cause one to NEVER, under any circumstance, use a lindane based head lice product.

PYRETHRINS (found in Nix, Rid, Clear, Pronto, End Lice, Elimate)

Pyrethrum and pyrethrins are pesticides made from flowers (a type of chrysanthemum). Synthetic pyrethroids (permethrins) are chemical imitations of these natural products. Synergists are chemicals added to increase their killing power.

Any pesticide can theoretically cause allergic reactions, although some are more likely than others. Products made from a member in this family of pesticides are likely to precipitate allergic reactions, particularly for people with allergies, asthma or chemical sensitivities. One reason is that they cross-react with ragweed and other plant pollens.

In *Designer Poisons*, Marion Moses, MD suggests that **these types of pesticides attack the brain and nervous system**. She further states that they can irritate the eyes, nose and throat and cause skin itching, burning, rashes, stinging, tingling and numbness. Taken internally, signs of poisoning include tremors, salivation (drooling), vomiting, diarrhea and irritability to sound and touch.

ACTIVE INGREDIENTS / INERT INGREDIENTS / SYNERGISTS

In addition to the active ingredients in head lice products (pesticides), there are other ingredients as well.

INERT INGREDIENTS These are added to pesticides to dissolve, emulsify or stabilize them or to facilitate the spreading, sticking and penetration of the pesticides. Quite often, **some of these inerts are as dangerous as the pesticide**. Many times their name is not on the label and are only listed as a total percentage of the product. The only way to find out is to request a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) from the company.

PIPERONYL BUTOXIDE (found in Rid, Clear, Pronto, A-200, End Lice) This synergist is an active ingredient in many of the pyrethrin pesticide family head lice products. Two recent reports in open literature show that it causes cancer and birth defects in rats. Thus, **any product, which contains this ingredient, cannot be recommended for use on children.**

BENZYL ALCOHOL (found in Clear) **ISOPROPYL ALCOHOL** (Ovide) These ingredients can be flammable and cause allergies, intestinal damage and vomiting. They have also been found to irritate the nose, throat and lungs, dull the nervous system and cause death in severe cases due to respiratory failure.

ACETONE (found in lindane shampoo) This ingredient could cause wheezing, congestion, headache, fatigue, hyperactivity, confusion, dizziness and eye, throat and nose irritation, liver, kidney and skin damage and birth defects. Symptoms include nausea, slurred speech and drowsiness. **The EPA considers it a hazardous waste.**

SUMMARY

As you can clearly see, certain ingredients in today's prescription-only and over-the-counter head lice products can be very harmful to our health. It makes absolutely no sense to use these shampoos when a safe, effective alternative **Lice Trap Shampoo** is available.

If you can solve head lice problems without pesticides, do so for your sake and that of your loved ones!

ONLY USE 'LICE TRAP SHAMPOO' FROM NATURAL GINESIS FOR SAFE EFFECTIVE REMOVAL OF HEAD LICE.



Making Life Easier... Naturally!