

Treatment



HOW IS PUBIC LICE (CRABS) TREATED?

- Visit your nearest health center for treatment. Pubic lice can be passed on until treatment is received and completed.
- Sexual contact between the infested person(s) and their sexual partners(s) should be avoided until all have been examined, treated and re-evaluated to rule out persistent infestation.
- Machine wash and dry clothing worn and bedding used by the infested person in hot water (at least 130°F) laundry cycle and the high heat drying cycle.

For more information or for testing information, please call or visit your local community health centre or health care provider.

To contact NITHA:

 (306) 953-5000

 www.nitha.com

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**NORTHERN INTER-TRIBAL
HEALTH AUTHORITY**

**PUBIC LICE
(CRABS)**

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WHAT IS PUBIC LICE (CRABS)?

Pubic lice or “crabs,” are small grey or brownish-red insects typically found attached to hair in the pubic area, but sometimes are found on other coarse body hair, such as hair on the legs, chest, armpits, mustache, beard, eyebrows, or eyelashes. Lice found on the head generally are head lice, not pubic lice.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Itching, scratching, redness, skin irritation and inflammation in the genital area, all as a reaction to the lice bites. Small blue spots can appear where the lice have bitten.
- Visible nits (lice eggs) or crawling lice.
- Extensive infestation can cause mild fever and malaise.
- Scratching can lead to a secondary bacterial skin infection.

HOW CAN YOU GET PUBIC LICE?

Pubic lice usually are spread through sexual contact and are most common in adults.

Occasionally, pubic lice may be spread by close personal contact or contact with articles such as clothing, bed linens, or towels that have been used by an infested person.

A common misconception is that pubic lice are spread easily by sitting on a toilet seat. This would be extremely rare because lice cannot live long away from a warm human body and they do not have feet designed to hold onto or walk on smooth surfaces such as toilet seats.

Persons infested with pubic lice should be examined for the presence of other sexually transmitted diseases.

WHO IS AT GREATEST RISK?

- People who engage with a new or anonymous sexual partner.
- Those who have sex with a person with an STI.
- People who engage in unprotected sex with multiple partners.
- Those who have had a previous history of STIs.



HOW IS PUBIC LICE PREVENTED?

The following are steps that can be taken to help prevent and control the spread of pubic (“crab”) lice:

- All sexual contacts of the infested person should be examined. All those who are infested should be treated.
- Sexual contact between the infested person(s) and their sexual partner(s) should be avoided until all have been examined, treated as necessary, and reevaluated to rule out persistent infestation.
- Machine wash and dry clothing worn and bedding used by the infested person in the hot water (at least 130°F) laundry cycle and the high heat drying cycle. Clothing and items that are not washable can be dry-cleaned OR sealed in a plastic bag and stored for 2 weeks.
- Do not share clothing, bedding, and towels used by an infested person.

Persons with pubic lice should be examined and treated for any other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) that may be present.

