



# GEORGIAN BAY WOMEN'S CLINIC

## Pubic Lice: What You Should Know

### What Are Pubic Lice?

Pubic lice, also known as crabs, are tiny insects that infest the hair in the pubic area. They can also be found in other coarse body hair, such as chest hair, armpits, eyebrows, and even eyelashes. Pubic lice feed on blood and can cause itching and discomfort.

### What Are the Symptoms?

- Intense itching in the pubic area
- Visible lice or nits (lice eggs) in the pubic hair
- Blue spots or small spots of blood in your underwear or on your skin caused by lice bites
- Irritability or difficulty sleeping due to itching

### How Can You Prevent Them?

Practice Safe Sex: Pubic lice are usually spread through sexual contact, so using condoms can reduce the risk of transmission.

**Avoid Sharing Personal Items:** Avoid sharing clothing, towels, or bedding with someone who has pubic lice.

**Maintain Good Hygiene:** Regularly wash your pubic area and launder clothing and bedding that may have come into contact with lice.

## **How Are They Diagnosed?**

**Visual Inspection:** Healthcare providers can usually diagnose pubic lice by examining the affected area and looking for the presence of lice or nits.

## **How Are They Treated?**

**Medications:** Over-the-counter or prescription medications, such as lotions or shampoos containing permethrin or pyrethrin, are commonly used to treat pubic lice.

**Follow Instructions:** Follow the instructions on the medication carefully, and make sure to thoroughly wash and dry your pubic area and clothing after treatment.

**Repeat Treatment if Necessary:** In some cases, you may need to repeat the treatment after a certain period to ensure that all lice and nits are eliminated.

## **Follow-Up**

**Recheck:** After completing treatment, check for any signs of persistent infestation and follow up with your healthcare provider if needed.

**Screening for Other STIs:** Since pubic lice are often transmitted through sexual contact, it's a good idea to get screened for other sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

**Remember:**

- Pubic lice infestations are common and treatable with the right medications.
- It's important to follow the treatment instructions carefully and take steps to prevent reinfestation.
- If you suspect you have pubic lice or have been in close contact with someone who does, see your healthcare provider for evaluation and treatment.