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Head Lice Case Triggers Pet Drug Warning

Using pet products to treat head lice and other conditions can make people seriously ill, Queensland Health warned today.

Chief Health Officer Dr Jeannette Young said the warning follows a recent case of a Queensland child being treated with a leading animal flea and tick product to get rid of head lice.

“These products are designed and registered to be used on animals in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions,” Dr Young said.

“These products are also covered by health regulations which are there to protect consumers.

“However, the main point is that animal products are poisons and are not safe for human use.

“There are often serious side-effects, including nose and throat irritations, respiratory conditions, vomiting, dizziness and abdominal pain.

“The effects can be even more serious for young children or women who are pregnant and breastfeeding.

“People really need to exercise common sense and always check the packaging of any chemical treatment to ensure the product is used appropriately.”

Dr Young said head lice was an embarrassing issue for many people. However, good advice was readily available from chemists and GP’s. Information is also available on the Queensland Health website www.health.qld.gov.au.

Queensland Health recommends people use the conditioner and combing technique to detect and treat head lice.

“It is safe, economical and avoids the use of chemicals,” Dr Young said.

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