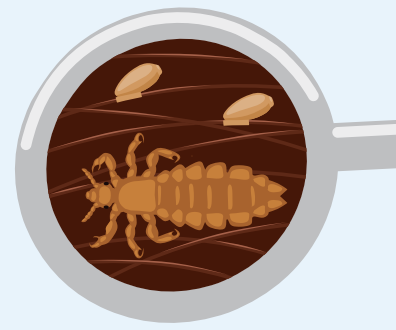


HEAD LICE TREATMENT AND PREVENTION



What are head lice?

Head lice (or *Pediculus humanus capitis*) are small, wingless parasitic insects about the size of a sesame seed that feed on blood on the human scalp. Head lice are very quick and use a hook-like claw to stay attached to the hair.

What are nits?

Nits are lice eggs laid by adult female lice. They are white oval sacs about the size of a pin head. The life cycle of head lice is approximately 30 days during which time each female louse can lay up to 7-10 nits a day.

Who gets head lice?

ANYONE can get head lice! It is most common in pre-school and elementary school-aged children (ages 3-12) and females. Kids are much more likely to get lice from family members and playmates than from classmates at school.

How do they spread?

DIRECT contact with an infested person.

INDIRECT contact with personal belongings of an infested person such as brushes, combs, clothing, bedding, upholstered furniture and car interiors.



Signs & Symptoms

ITCHING AND SCRATCHING usually on the back of the scalp and neck and behind the ears.

SORES ON THE HEAD caused by scratching.

VISIBLE lice or nits.

REMEMBER: NITS STICK TO THE HAIR.

Some children may have no symptoms. Don't confuse dirt or dandruff with nits.

What to do if someone in your family has lice

- ALL Family members living with an infested person should be examined for the presence of head lice.
- Treat ANY family member with a head lice infestation.

How to treat for lice

- USE AN FDA APPROVED, over-the-counter anti-pediculosis product. Prescription products are also available.
- READ THE INSTRUCTIONS before using any product and follow ALL instructions.
- COMB HAIR with a fine-tooth nit comb to remove lice and nits.
- DISINFECT all combs and brushes before using again by submerging them in hot water (at least 130° F) for 5–10 minutes or soak in anti-pediculosis shampoo for 1 hour.
- CHECK YOUR CHILD'S HAIR DAILY. Manually remove nits for 2 weeks following the initial treatment.
- RETREAT your child according to instructions on the box or label.
- CONTINUE to check your child's head every 2–3 days for at least 2–3 weeks.

CAUTION: Children under two years of age or women who are pregnant or breastfeeding should not use an anti-pediculosis product.

Persons with chronic illness or the elderly should consult their healthcare provider.

Prevention Information

Should all family members be treated?

ALL family members residing with an infested person should be examined for the presence of head lice.

Treat ANY family member with a head lice infestation.

Does the household environment need to be treated?

- Routine cleaning of the child's environment, including washing recently used clothing, bedding and towels in hot water is recommended.
- Items that can not be washed should be sealed in plastic bags for 2 weeks.
- Vacuum carpeting, upholstery and car seats.

REMEMBER: Remember: Head lice can survive off a human host for up to 48 hours and nits will hatch within 7–10 days.

What if I don't get rid of head lice after treatment?

Consult your healthcare provider.

How can the spread of head lice be stopped?

The key to successful eradication of a head lice infestation is to break their life cycle through proper treatment.

Will I ever get rid of head lice?

YES, it will end, but it takes time. Don't get discouraged! The main reasons for continued infestations are:

- Did not follow directions on the product.
- Did not remove all lice or nits.
- Did not treat the environment thoroughly.

REMEMBER: Each person with head lice needs a complete treatment. Do not split a single box of shampoo or container of rinse treatment between those that are infested.



Who should I notify if my child has head lice?

- Pediatrician
- School Health Room
- Playmates and close friends outside of school

There is NO proof that the following treatments work:

- Vinegar Compounds that claim to dissolve the glue on the nits "to ease their removal"
- Mayonnaise
- Olive Oil
- Tea Tree Oil
- Lotions that claim to "suffocate" lice
- Petroleum jelly
- Other household chemicals, including: kerosene, gasoline, paint thinners and turpentine