



A Parents Guide to Head Lice

Easy Steps to Control Head Lice



What Are Head Lice?

Head Lice are small insects that live in people's hair and feed on their blood. Lice glue their eggs, called nits, to the hair.

Eggs take six to nine days to hatch and seven or more days for the lice to become egg-laying adults.

Head lice die quickly (within two days) without feeding so they can not live very long away from your child's head.

Facts About Head Lice

- Head lice move by crawling and can not jump or fly.
- Head lice are not known to spread diseases.
- Head lice can live anywhere on the scalp, but are commonly found near the ears and back of the neck.
- Parents of school age children should check their children regularly for lice.

HOW DO PEOPLE GET HEAD LICE?

Children can get head lice from others through direct head-to-head contact or by sharing combs, hats, clothing, barrettes, helmets, scarves, headphones, or other personal items.

Head lice can be a problem in homes, day care centers and schools. Children are much more likely to get head lice from family members and playmates than from classmates.

How Do I Know If My Child Has Head Lice?

The only way to know if your child has lice is to look through their hair. If your child has head lice their scalp may be itchy. Head lice can be difficult to see. An adult louse is the size of a sesame seed.

It can be easy to confuse dandruff with nits. Nits stick to the side of the hair follicle and can not be easily brushed away like dandruff.



How Do I Get Rid Of My Child's Head Lice?

- Application of lice shampoo (performed as directed).
- Follow up treatment may be necessary, follow instructions according to the bottles label.
- Metal (not plastic) nit comb. Nit combing should be performed everyday for two weeks.
- The best way to remove nits is to part the hair into small sections. As each section is combed, place it to the side. It is easier to comb wet hair.
- Any eggs that can not be combed out must still be removed. This can be done by picking the nit out with your fingernails or by cutting a single piece of hair between the scalp and the nit.
- You can use a flat iron on the hair.
- Check all family member's hair completely.



Very Important Treatment Information

- Follow the labels directions carefully.
- Treat only people who have head lice.
- Do not leave the product on for a longer time than recommended, it will not kill the lice faster.
- Each person with head lice needs a complete treatment. Do not split a single bottle between people.
- After treatment continue to comb hair daily with a metal nit comb for two weeks.
- Wait at least 7-10 days before treating your child for a second time with medicated shampoo. Remember this is a medication that kills lice and can be absorbed through the skin.



Other Things You Can Do To Get Rid Of Lice And Nits In Your Home

- Wash clothing, and bedding.
- Seal non-washable items in a plastic bag for 2-3 weeks.
- Boil combs, brushes, hair bands and barrettes in water for five minutes or soak them in rubbing alcohol for one hour.
- Vacuum carpets and furniture daily.

For more information you can look up headlice.org or call Health Services at (209)858-0872

