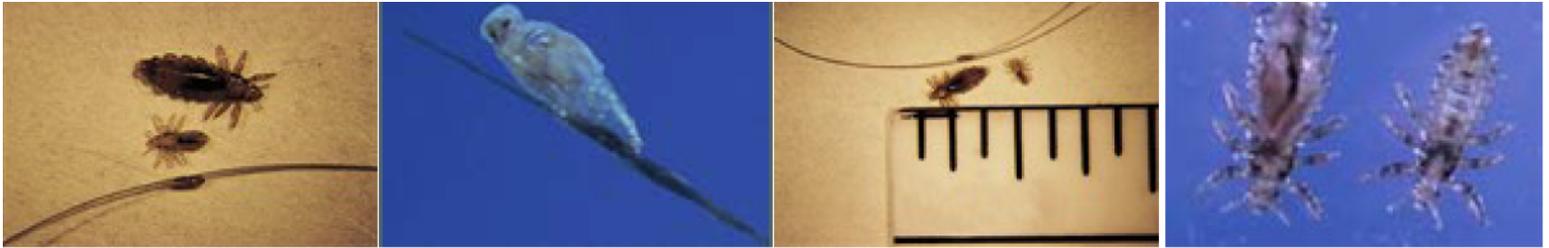


A GUIDE TO HEAD LICE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT

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What are Head Lice?

Head lice are very small, tan-colored insects about the size of a sesame seed which live only on human heads. They live and lay eggs (nits) close to the scalp. The nits are about the size of the eye of a needle, oval shaped, and grey, white, brown, or tan in color. Head lice depend on human blood for their survival.



How are Head Lice Spread?

Lice are passed by direct contact with an infested person, or shared personal or household items. Lice do not spread to or from pets. Lice do not jump or fly. They crawl and can fall off the head. Lice do not live longer than 48 hours off the head. They only lay nits on hair shafts attached to the head. Nits that hatch after they have fallen off the head will die quickly without a blood meal.

Prevention of Head Lice

Children should not share hair care items, towels, clothing, hats, sports headgear or head phones. Avoid sharing lockers. If jackets and hats must be hung next to each other, control the spread of lice by hanging the clothing inside a plastic bag. Check children's heads often so that new cases can be treated promptly.

What are the Symptoms of Head Lice?

Head lice cause itching of the scalp and neck. The nits are glued to the hairs within ½ in from the scalp, often found at the back of the head and behind the ears. Tiny red blood spots (louse bite marks) on the scalp are a sign of lice. These bites cause itching of the scalp and neck. Nits should not be confused with dandruff. Dandruff can easily

be flicked off the hair; nits are glued firmly to an individual hair. A magnifying glass and a bright light will help you spot lice or nits. Live lice move very quickly through hair which makes them hard to see.

What to do if a family member gets head lice.

There are several ways to get rid of lice, but all of them follow the same basic steps:

- Kill the lice
- Remove all nits
- Remove lice from the environment
- Follow-up and repeat as needed

Head Lice Treatment – Options to Kill Lice

Treatments work either by suffocating or chemical destruction. A variety of treatment products are available at the drugstore or grocery store. Check every member of the family when one member has head lice. All family members with lice or nits must be treated, preferably on the same day. Use a different towel for each step of treatment and for each person treated and wash and dry all towels after use. Hair cuts can also help get rid of nits.

Chemical Agents

- Over-the-Counter Crème Rinse
- Prescription Lotion
- Over-the-Counter Shampoo
- Prescription Shampoo

Suffocating Agents

- Mayonnaise
- Vegetable Oil
- Petrolatum Jelly

Not Recommended for Treatment

- Antibiotics (may increase antibiotic resistance)
- Elimate (not a recommended use)
- Kerosene or any other flammable liquid (may cause severe burns)
- Insect killing products [e.g. Raid®] (toxic to children)

Treatment When Using Chemical Agents

Over the counter lice killing products do not kill 100% of all viable nits, and there have been reports of treatment failure. A second treatment 7-10 days after the first treatment is recommended to kill newly hatched head lice. Therefore, even when using over the counter lice killing products, regular head checks and nit removal is a must. It is important to follow instructions on the package carefully.

Important Cautions

- All chemical agents are pesticides and may be harmful or toxic if misused.
- Should not be used on children under two years of age.
- Consult your physician before using chemical treatments with people who are pregnant, breastfeeding, or have a pre-existing medical condition.
- Do not use if there are sores or open lesions on the scalp.
- Never use near the eyes, even if lice or nits are in the eyebrows or eyelashes.
- Do not use “just in case”
- Do not use more often than recommended
- It may take up to 24 hours for lice to die. If live lice are still present two days after treating, switch to a suffocating agent to kill the lice.
- Do not use household lice sprays or any other insecticidal sprays.

Treatment When Using Suffocating Agents

There are several at home remedies that have been used to treat lice as well.

Mayonnaise Treatment

- Plastic bag or shower cap
- Hair clips or scotch tape
- Regular mayonnaise

Steps

- Use 100% real mayonnaise. Do not use light or low fat.
- Apply generously to hair, making sure the hair and scalp are saturated.
- Pile hair on head, if needed, and cover with a close-fitting shower cap OR cut plastic bag and wrap around head like a turban. Use scotch tape or hair clips to keep on the head. Leave cap or bag on for as long as possible (at least 4 hours BUT works best for 8+hours).

- Remove the shower cap and wash hair lightly to get out most of the mayonnaise.
- Towel dry the hair
- Remove all nits as discussed under the Nit Removal Section below.
- Wash hair thoroughly with shampoo and pick out any remaining nits.
- Keep checking and removing nits every day.
- Repeat treatment every day or every other day for 2 weeks.

Oil Treatment – Vegetable, Mineral, or Olive Oil

- Plastic bag or shower cap
- Hair clips or scotch tape
- Oil of your choice

Steps

- Part hair and apply directly to head making sure the hair and scalp are saturated.
- Pile hair on head, if needed, and cover with a close-fitting shower cap OR cut plastic bag and wrap around head. Use scotch tape or hair clips to keep on the head. Leave cap or bag on for as long as possible (at least 4 hours BUT works best for 8+hours).
- Remove all nits as discussed under the Nit Removal Section below.
- Wash hair thoroughly with shampoo and pick out any remaining nits.
- Keep checking and removing nits every day.
- Repeat treatment every day or every other day for 2 weeks.

Petrolatum Agent Treatment – e.g. Baby Oil, Dish Soap, Vaseline

- Plastic bag or shower cap
- Hair clips or scotch tape
- Petrolatum of your choice

Steps

- Apply petrolatum jelly generously to the hair, making sure the hair and scalp are saturated (approximately two ounces should be sufficient).
- Pile hair on head, if needed, and cover with a close-fitting shower cap OR cut plastic bag and wrap around head like a turban. Use scotch tape or hair clips to keep on the head. Leave cap or bag on for as long as possible (at least 4 hours BUT works best for 8+hours).

- Remove the shower cap and rinse hair with baby oil or dish soap to get out most of the petrolatum.
- Wash hair with shampoo to remove most of the remaining petrolatum gel.
- Remove all nits as discussed under the Nit Removal Section below.
- Keep checking and removing nits every day.
- Repeat treatment every day or every other day for 2 weeks.

Nit Removal-The key to successful head lice treatment

Some lice eggs (nits) survive head lice treatments. The only way to be sure that lice won't come back is to pick out all nits. Nits left on the hair can hatch and cause a new case of head lice. Since nits are very small and hard to see, continue to check for nits every day for several weeks. It is easy to miss a few nits!

Getting Started

- Find a good comb
- Slide nits off the hair shafts using their fingernails, or cut nits out using scissors or finger nail clipper
- Use hair clips to use for pinning up hair.
- Find an are with strong overhead lighting or bright sunlight.
- Find something relaxing and enjoyable for the person with lice to do.

Finding the Nits

- Oval-shaped and grey, white, brown or tan in color.
- Can be as small as the eye of a needle and glued at an angle to the hair shaft.
- May be cemented anywhere on the hair shaft, but are usually close to the scalp.
- Usually larger numbers of nits at the nape of the neck, around the ears, and at the crown of the head.
- Using a nit loosening agent may help speed nit removal process (suffocating agent or a mixture of white vinegar and water).

Process for Combing the Nits Out

- Divide and fasten hair into small (one inch) sections, pinning each section together using hair pins.
- Using a nit comb, go through each hair section, passing the comb from the scalp to the ends of the hair.
- Look closely for nits and live lice on the comb. Remove any lice or nits from

the comb as you go.

- Dip the comb into a cup of water, or use a paper towel, an old toothbrush, an index card, or un-waxed dental floss to clean the comb.
- Comb each section until completely free of nits, checking thin sections of hair for any you may have missed.
- Pin back clean sections of hair as you go.
- Move on, section by section, until all nits are removed.

Clean Up

- Soak nit comb, hair combs, brushes, hair pins in very hot water (130° F) for 15 minutes.
- Wash hands and clean under nails thoroughly.
- Vacuum area thoroughly

Follow-Up

A few lice or nits will probably be missed. Check every day until all are removed, in order to prevent a new lice infestation. If 6 or more nits are found during daily head checks, lice may still be active on the head. Kill the lice using one of the suffocating treatment methods, and repeat the combing-out process.

Removing Lice from the Environment

Lice do not survive off the human head for more than 48 hours. Cleaning activities are best done on the same day as treatment. Remember, lice do not fly or jump. Lice do not spread to or from pets.

Vacuum Thoroughly

- Upholstered furniture
- Car seats used by persons with lice
- Carpets and rugs
- Floors
- Pillows
- Seats in the car
- Favorite stuffed toys

Place in hot dryer for at least 20 minutes

- Look closely for nits and live lice on the comb. Remove any lice or nits from
- Bed sheets and blankets

- Towels
- Coats, caps and scarves (if worn in last week)

Wash above items in 130 degrees Fahrenheit water

- Wait for the water to return to 130F between loads
- Go to Laundromat if water is not hot enough

Bag

- If items can't be washed, dried or vacuumed, place in a plastic bag for 2 weeks.
- Place bags out of children's reach

**** DO NOT USE : Household Lice Killers or Insecticidal Sprays ****

Prevention

- Avoid putting heads together with other children, including “reading time” on pillows at school.
- Do not share hair brushes, combs, barrettes, hair ribbons or other items put on the head.
- Do not share or borrow hats, batting helmets or scarves.
- Do not share clothing, pillows, bedding or sleeping bags.
- Hang hats and coats separate from others, not on top of one another.
- Wash any clothing retrieved from lost and found before wearing.
- Check your child's head frequently especially after being alerted by the school of head lice.
- Provide each member of the family with personal towels and do not share.

Follow Up and Repeat as Needed

- Success in lice treatment depends on daily checking to be sure that all lice and nits are gone.
- Suffocating treatments and nit removal are harmless and can be repeated as often as desired.
- If no new lice or nits are seen for three weeks, most likely the lice are gone for good!