

HEAD LICE

The Facts about Head Lice

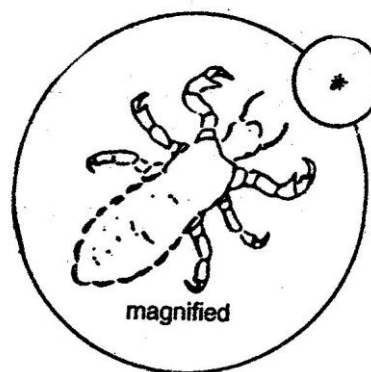


- * Head lice are small insects (about the size of a sesame seed when fully grown) that live very close to the scalp.
- * Nits are not the same as lice. Nits are the empty egg cases which stick to the hair.
- * You only have head lice if you find a living moving louse (not a nit).
- * Anybody can get head lice - adults and children.
- * Head lice don't care if the hair is dirty or clean, short or long.
- * A lot of infections are caught from close family and friends in the home and community, not at school.
- * Head lice can walk from one head to another, if the heads are pressed together for some time. They do not fly, jump or swim.
- * Regular hair care may help to spot lice early.
- * The best way to stop infection is for families to check their heads regularly using detection combing.

How to detect head lice

You will need:

A PLASTIC DETECTOR COMB
(These are available from your pharmacist - ask for help if there are none on display)



- 1) Wash the hair well and rinse, apply lots of conditioner but do not rinse.
- 2) Ensure that there is **good lighting** - daylight is best.
- 3) First, comb the hair with an ordinary comb. Then, using the detector comb, begin at the top of head and making sure that the comb is touching the scalp, slowly draw the comb towards the ends of the hair.
- 4) Check the teeth of the comb carefully.
- 5) Repeat steps (3) and (4), working your way around the head from the top of the scalp to the ends of the hair.

**If there are head lice, you will find
one or more on the teeth of the
comb**

- 6) If you find lice, or something which you are unsure about, stick it to a piece of paper with clear sticky tape and take it to your GP or local pharmacist.

The best way to stop infection is to do detection combing regularly.

NEVER use insecticidal liquids, lotions or shampoos to PREVENT infection, or just in case.



How to treat head lice

DO NOT TREAT UNLESS YOU ARE SURE YOU HAVE FOUND A **LIVING, MOVING LOUSE**

Ask your GP or pharmacist which head louse lotion or liquid to use
Do NOT use head louse shampoo



In a well ventilated room....

- 1) Apply the lotion or liquid to **dry** hair
- 2) Part the hair near the top, put a few drops of the lotion or liquid on to the scalp and rub in some more of the lotion or liquid. Do this again and again until the whole scalp is wet. You don't need to take the lotion or liquid any further than where you would put a ponytail band. Take care not to get the lotion or liquid in the eyes or on the face.

You should use at least one small bottle of lotion or liquid per head, more if the hair is thick

- 3) Let the lotion or liquid dry on the hair naturally. Keep well away from naked flames, cigarettes or other sources of heat. Do NOT use a hair dryer.
- 4) Leave on the hair for 12 hours or overnight. Then, wash and rinse as normal.
- 5) Repeat the entire treatment seven days later, using second bottle of the same lotion or liquid.
- 6) Check the head two days after the second treatment. If you still find living, moving lice ask your School Nurse for advice.

Your School Nurse is

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Contact Tracing



You need to find where the lice came from or you may be reinfected. The source is probably a family member or close friend, who probably does not know they have lice.

Use the check list below to make sure you get in touch with everyone who has been in close (head to head) contact with the infected person. All the people on your list should check themselves and their families for head lice using detection combing. Anyone who is infected with living, moving lice should be treated straight away.

Contact check list:

	Name (s)	Contacted
Parents		
Grandparents		
Brothers / Sisters		
Sons / Daughters		
Aunts / Uncles		
Cousins		
Nieces / Nephews		
Friends		
Lodgers		
School / Nursery		
Babysitter		
Clubs		
Guide / Scouts		
Other		

The problem Won't Go Away?

DID YOU ...

- ... Use enough lotion or liquid?
- ... Apply it correctly?
- ... Let it dry naturally?
- ... Leave it on for 12 hours?
- ... Use a second bottle 7 days after the first?
- ... Check all your close family and friends?
- ... Check adults as well as children?
- ... Treat all infected contacts at the same item?

REMEMBER

It doesn't matter how many nits you have, or how itchy your scalp is - if you can't find a living, moving louse, you don't have lice.