

Lice Prevention

Lice Prevention at School and Home

This information is intended to help everyone...

- ✓ Learn about lice,
- ✓ Discover how to detect them, and
- ✓ Work together to reduce their presence

One surprising fact about head lice is that many people who have lice don't itch and have no symptoms.

Lice can be brought into schools in so many ways. Any person who walks through the door could be a carrier. Sometimes parents or siblings have lice on their own heads and are unaware of it. So checking EVERY family member is important!

Head lice have nothing to do with the cleanliness of a house or our parenting skills. Lice are not particular about your income or hygiene. Anyone can have lice. Lice love everyone!

Check every week, treat with lice shampoo if lice or nits are found and remove all live lice and nits using a comb or fingers to slide them off the hair shaft.



Top Lice Prevention Tips:

- ✓ Check your children weekly for lice all year long!
(Many people don't itch, so they don't realize they have lice!)
- ✓ Check ALL family members if one is infected.
- ✓ Report the case to your school so other families can check their children.
- ✓ Have your student check in the school office when your child returns to school after treatment.
- ✓ Follow all directions for the lice treatment you have selected.
- ✓ Comb (pick) your child's head DAILY for 2-3 weeks until all lice and nits are gone. (Thoroughness is essential!)

What Can Schools Do?

While the hard work of eliminating lice is done in homes by parents treating and combing, schools take some proactive steps to minimize the spread of lice wherever possible.

The Actions at School are common responses to lice cases in the buildings. Actions at Home are the suggested response to Lice if your student has them.

What Happens When A Student Has Lice at School?

When lice are found on a student at school, the parent will be notified by phone. The student may be picked up early or remain in the normal learning environment until the end of the day. If a parent is unfamiliar with what lice look like, they are welcome to come to school to be shown the lice and/or eggs. The parent is to treat the lice at home with lice removal treatment and remove the nits (eggs) from the hair, paying special attention to the nits that are closest to the student's scalp.

The student may return to school when they:

- Have NO live lice and
- Have NO nits (eggs) within $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of the scalp and
- Have had their head checked in the school office and have been given the "okay" to return to class.

Actions We Can Take Together

Actions at Schools

Notification - Parents will be notified when a student is found to have lice at school. And families of classmates will be notified about the lice. No names will ever be released.

Check - All students returning to school after treatment will be checked prior to returning to the classroom.

Educate - Schools will educate families on how to reduce the chances of getting lice, how to identify and check for lice and how to get rid of them.

Teach Students Schools will teach students how to prevent the spreading of lice.

Soft Toys - Bag and seal for 2 weeks (pillows, play clothes, and other clothing items included).

Vacuum - Vacuum carpets and sofas

Bag Coats - Provide plastic bags to store coats, backpacks, hats, scarves, gloves during the school day.

Provide - Treatment kits for anyone who needs assistance with purchase.

Actions at Home

Check - Check all family members heads (many do not have symptoms).

Treat - If live lice or nits are found treat with lice removal shampoo (or other recommended treatment), including manual removal of nits closer than $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the scalp. Treat, then ALWAYS follow with nit-picking.

Notify - Report any cases of found lice to the school the same day.

Report -When your student no longer has any live lice or nits within $\frac{1}{4}$ " of the scalp, have them return to school, reporting first to the office to be checked prior to reentry into their classroom.

Recheck -Once lice are gone in your family, check the whole family once a week for the rest of the school year.

Vacuum -Vacuum all carpets and furniture.

Bag -Bag all soft objects that people have cuddled up against.

Launder - Wash and dry all bedding and pillow cases.

Consult - If you have difficulty getting rid of the lice see your physician.

Playdates - Or sleepovers, ask to agree that each family checks their child before they get together.

Contribute - Funds to help with the purchase of lice shampoo and combs for those families who need assistance.

Head Lice Life Cycle

Stage	Action	Notes
Adult Lice	→ Live lice reach the head and lay eggs (nits)	→ Nits are always laid by live lice - you cannot catch nits. → Lice have six legs to grasp the hair and crawl - they cannot jump, hop, or fly. → Human lice do not thrive on pets. → Lice can live for approximately 30 days on a human host, and females can lay up to 100 nits. → Lice cannot survive off human hosts for more than 24-48 hours. → Eggs/nits can survive a week or more away from a human.
Egg (Nit)	→ Nits take 7-10 days to hatch	
Nymphs	→ Nymphs take 7-10 days to mature & for the female to begin laying her own eggs	
Adult Lice	→ Mature nymphs have the ability to reproduce and continue the cycle	

Important: Common lice remedies call for treatments to be administered in seven-day cycles. This is designed to kill the initial adult lice (so they can no longer lay eggs), and catch any new nymphs hatched in the interim before they are mature enough to begin laying eggs again.

How are head lice spread?

→ Head lice can be spread whenever there is direct contact of the head or hair with an infested individual. Lice can also be spread through sharing of personal articles like hats, towels, brushes, helmets, hair ties, etc. There is also a possibility of spreading head lice via a pillow, headrest or similar items.

→ Head lice do not jump or fly and generally cannot survive longer than 48 hours off the host.

→ Don't forget to check everyone in your family if one family member is infested!

How do I inspect my child's head for lice?

→ Begin by separating hair into small sections.

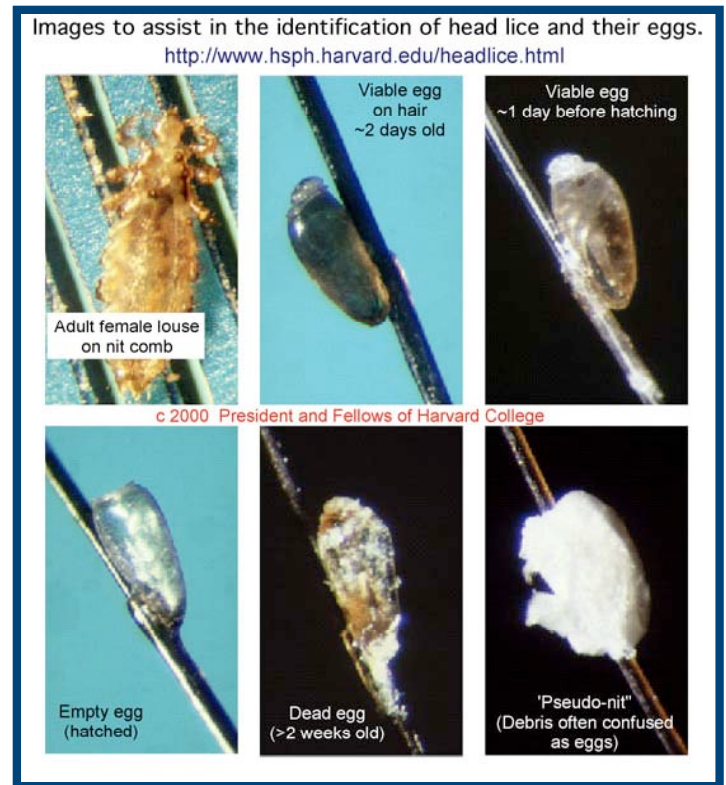
→ Using natural light or a high intensity lamp (and magnifying glass if needed) examine the hair behind the ears, back of the neck, and scalp for crawling lice or nits.

Identifying Head Lice

Lice are hard to see!

- Nits are small yellowish-white, oval shaped eggs that are glued at an angle to the hair shaft.
- Nymphs/Lice are clear in color when hatched, and develop a reddish-brown color after feeding on human blood. They need blood to survive.
- Lice are the size of a sesame seed or smaller.
- Nits cannot be easily flicked away like dandruff - they require special combs or even fingernails on fine hair. Some parents have found pulling hairs with eggs or even cutting them with a small scissors is easiest.

Treating My Child's Head



Treatment (using chosen product) + Combing = Total Removal

Which removal method is best?

The literature and information on the web, in schools, and from other parents can be overwhelming for parents wanting to find the best, most efficient, and healthiest treatment option for lice. Here are some of the dilemmas:

- Parents are looking to avoid harsh "chemical" treatments, but still want the lice dead.
- Treatments may kill the adult live lice, but cannot kill the nits.

Because of their tiny size, pervasive nature, and lengthy life-cycle, many families have recurrent lice infestations - giving them the impression that the lice are either a "new" case or may be resistant to treatment.

Are lice shampoos potentially hazardous?

The FDA requires testing for safety before they give their approval to a product, but some individuals have unique vulnerabilities that must be considered before any treatment.

Individuals who have a pre-existing illness including asthma, epilepsy, brain tumors, cancer or AIDS, those on medication, or who have been previously treated for head lice, as well as pregnant and nursing mothers may be more vulnerable to side effects and should seek medical advice.

In general, physicians recommend the Rid or Nix treatment options over homeopathic alternatives, as they have been proven to kill adult and nymph lice.

Step 1 - Select A Lice Treatment

Treatment	Action	Pros/Cons
Rid (Pyrethrin)	Follow the directions in the box as provided, but generally: ✓Apply product to DRY hair in generous quantity. ✓Leave for 10 minutes. ✓Wash out with water only (not soap) ✓Repeat in 7-10 days to kill nymphs or adult lice that may have hatched in the interim.	Pros: Rid contains Pyrethrin, a natural therapy for treating lice. It is a plant extract derived from chrysanthemums. Cons: Individuals with several allergies or asthma often may need to use Nix because it is more pure than Rid.
Nix (Permethrin)	Same actions as above for Rid	Nix (Permethrin) is a synthetic version of pyrethrin. May be better for individuals with allergies or asthma.
Cetaphil Olive Oil Tea Tree Oil	Follow directions provided with the specific treatment, but generally: ✓Apply product to DRY hair in generous quantities. ✓Leave in for a period of time (sometimes overnight). These products are designed to smother the live lice to kill them.	Pros: Some families believe recurrent cases of lice are due to "resistant" lice, and homeopathic methods are better than the shampoo at deterring lice. NOTE; If any live lice die after an initial shampoo treatment, they are not resistant. Cons: Studies indicate these methods do not kill lice, they simply make them hibernate. This makes them easier to pick, but does not eliminate them.

How do you treat a home or school for lice?

Homes and schools don't get head lice - people do. Head lice are human parasites and require human blood to survive. Vacuuming is the safest and best way to remove lice or fallen hairs with attached nits from upholstered furniture, rugs, stuffed animals or car seats - wherever someone with head lice may have rested their head. ***Pesticidal sprays are unwarranted and may pose personal and environmental hazards.*** Vacuum, bag up soft toys and save your time and energy for what benefits you the most - thorough nit removal.

Step 2 - Combing Head Daily for 2-3 Weeks Until Lice & Nits Are Gone

<p>Combing</p>	<p>√No lice product has been highly successful in killing nits. All require daily nit combing/manual nit picking for the duration of the treatment - typically 2-3 weeks until all adult and nits are gone.</p> <p>√Some families have found that having two (or more) adults checking for lice is helpful - many adults have trouble seeing lice and nits, and additional sets of eyes are helpful in getting ALL of the lice and nits.</p> <p>√Magnifying glasses and a bright light are helpful in this process.</p>	<p>Pros: Combined with any treatment listed above, combing will get rid of lice if done thoroughly. The only lice treatment with a strong chance of locating and removing nits.</p> <p>Some parents find the metal lice combs to be easier to work with than plastic combs.</p> <p>Cons: Labor-intensive and time-consuming (but not optional). Some hair may be "too fine" for lice combs and may require manually picking the nits off the hair shafts.</p>
<p>Lindane Kerosene Malthion</p>	<p>All three of these are strong toxic chemical treatments, and should NOT be used in treating lice.</p>	<p>DO NOT USE THESE IN YOUR HOME OR ON YOUR CHILD.</p> <p>Lindane is banned in the US. Malthion should be used by prescription only. Kerosene - toxic and flammable - should never be used!</p>

I've Cleaned My Child's Head, Now What

Because of the creepy nature of lice, it's difficult to know what to clean, what not to clean, and how often to repeat the cleaning.

Catching lice from pillows, cars and furniture...

If a louse comes off the head or a nit attached to a hair shaft is left behind, it may be possible for the louse to infest another person who places their head in that area. Vacuuming is recommended on any areas or items that may be in contact with those who are infested.

Live lice can only live approximately 48 hours off a human host.

Nits can survive 7-10 days before hatching away from a human host.

Resource	Details
The School Office Staff & Nurse	<p>The school nurse is available at school to help parents learn how to look for lice and answer lice-related questions. The school office staff is also available for your questions when the nurse is not available.</p> <p>The office staff will also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Notify your child's classroom if there is a classmate with lice. The name of the student is not released. → Provide free lice shampoo kits if your family has a financial need. → Check your child for lice and nits when they return to school after treatment has been completed at home (this is required). → Coordinate any other school-wide activities around lice communications or protocol.
Your Primary Care Physician	<p>If you have treated your child for three weeks, and lice are <i>STILL</i> present, seek medical treatment and advice from your pediatrician. Or if you have treated for lice, think they are gone, but suddenly see them again in a single month, seek medical treatment and advice (you may never have fully gotten rid of them the first time).</p>
Other Suggested Resources	<p>The Internet has lice resources available to parents, however it ranges from the helpful to the overwhelming. Several resources which have been reviewed by medical personnel and may be helpful to parents include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → CDC Website: www.cdc.gov/lice/head → Michigan Head Lice Manual: www.michigan.gov/documents/Final_Head_Lice_Manual_103750_7.pdf

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