

Transmission of Head Lice

Head lice are transmitted by:

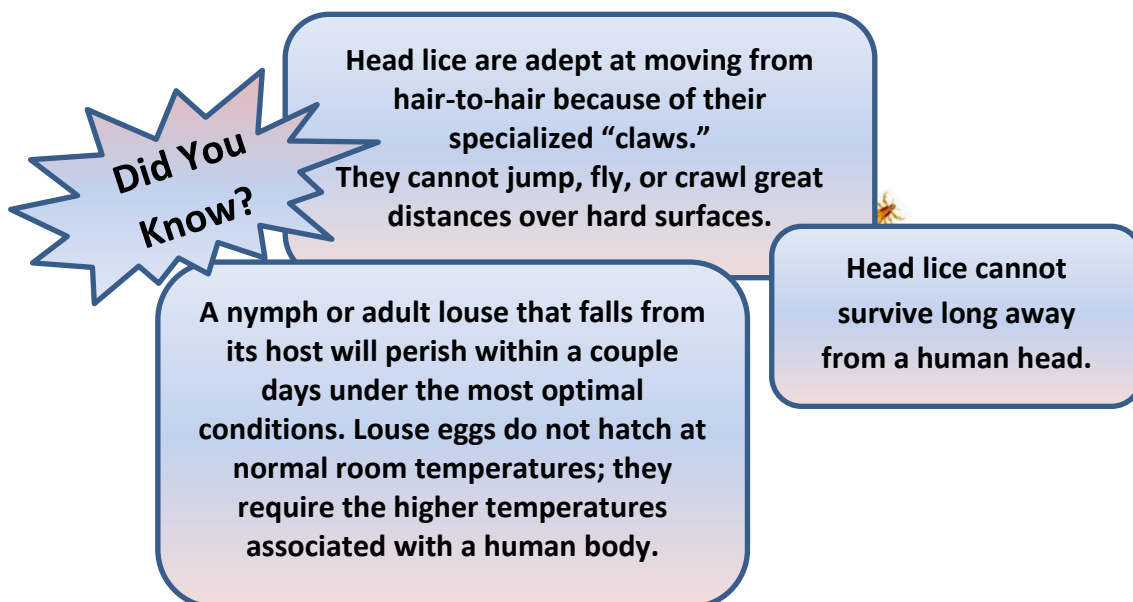
- Person-to-person transmission (direct contact)
 - The majority of transmissions of head lice occur by direct head-to-head contact with an infested person. Most of the time, this is a close friend or relative.
- Vector transmission (indirect contact)
 - This type of transmission may occur through the sharing of bedding, or by using personal items such as combs, brushes, scarves, hair ornaments, or hats of an infested person. Although transmission via indirect contact is possible, ***it is rare.***

Common ways of transmission:

- Head-to-head contact
 - Slumber parties
 - Shared beds
 - Sport activities
 - Reading circles
- Without head-to-head contact. **(These ways of transmission are highly unlikely)**
 - School buses
 - Hats, helmets, or headphones
 - Gym mats
 - Sitting at a desk

Anyone can get head lice, but some people are at a greater risk than others. Those people include:

- Children between the ages of 3 and 11 years
- Girls are more likely to get head lice than boys, possibly because of their play styles and sharing of personal items.*
- People with long or short hair can contract head lice. Although all races can get head lice, studies show that children of African-American descent are less likely to become infested.



*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Head Lice Epidemiology: <http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/epi/html>.