

TIPS TO TREAT A CASE OF HEAD LICE

Getting rid of head lice is a time-consuming process, but it's not impossible! Fortunately, there are a number of nonprescription treatments available and your pharmacist or doctor can offer advice on selecting a product. After using the medication, be sure to remove every last nit, because even one nit can cause a re-infestation.

1. Get tough - treat the head with a head lice-killing product:

- Over-the-counter treatments, usually in creme rinse or shampoo form, are available at the pharmacy.
- Use only one treatment product at a time, and follow the directions carefully and completely.
- Never use the treatment near the eyes.
- Home remedies, such as mayonnaise and petroleum jelly are not scientifically proven to work.
- Never use unapproved chemicals such as pet shampoos, gasoline, or kerosene.

2. Remove head lice and nits:

- Treatments kill head lice, but they do not remove the nits.
- Unlike dandruff or hairspray, nits cannot be removed by blowing or brushing the hair. Removal of nits is absolutely necessary for proper head lice management.
- After treatment, and while hair is still damp:
 - Part the hair into four sections. Select a section to work on. Start at the top of the head in the section you have picked.
 - With one hand, lift a 1-inch strand of hair. Get the teeth of the comb as close to the scalp as possible and always comb away from the head.
 - If you pick nits out with your hand, you may want to wear rubber gloves, or wash hands carefully after nit removal on each child. Lice can live for a short time under your fingernails, and could be spread to you or to your other children.
 - Using clips, pin back each strand of hair after you have combed out the nits. Clean the comb as you go. Wipe the nits from the comb with a tissue and dispose of the tissue in a sealed bag to prevent re-infestation.
 - When finished combing, recheck the entire head for nits and repeat combing if necessary.
 - Check daily for head lice or nits you may have missed

3. Make a clean sweep:

- If head lice are already in the household make a clean sweep - clean your home thoroughly.
- All personal headgear (hats, hair ribbons, helmets, etc.), scarves, coats, towels, and bed linens should be cleaned by machine washing in hot water then dried using the hot cycle of a dryer for at least twenty minutes.
- Personal articles such as clothing, bedspreads, blankets, pillows, or stuffed animals that cannot be washed should be dry-cleaned or sealed in a plastic bag for a period of two weeks.
- Personal combs and brushes should be cleaned by soaking in hot water above 130° F for five to ten minutes.
- Vacuum everywhere. It is recommended that all rooms and furniture used by infested household members be thoroughly vacuumed. Vacuum all carpets, mattresses, upholstered furniture, and car seats.

4. Be on guard - check head again in seven days

- Use products in accordance with directions for use.
- If live lice are found in seven days, another treatment with the head lice-killing product is necessary.
- Missing even one tiny nit can result in a re-infestation.

5. Get smart about prevention - teach your child not to share personal items

- Combs, brushes, and headgear are some of the most common items that carry head lice from one person to another.
- Pillows, bed linens, hats, headphones, and bicycle, and sports helmets can carry head lice.
- Encourage your child to share toys and books, but to keep some personal belongings personal and store them in a backpack if there are no private cubbies in the classroom.