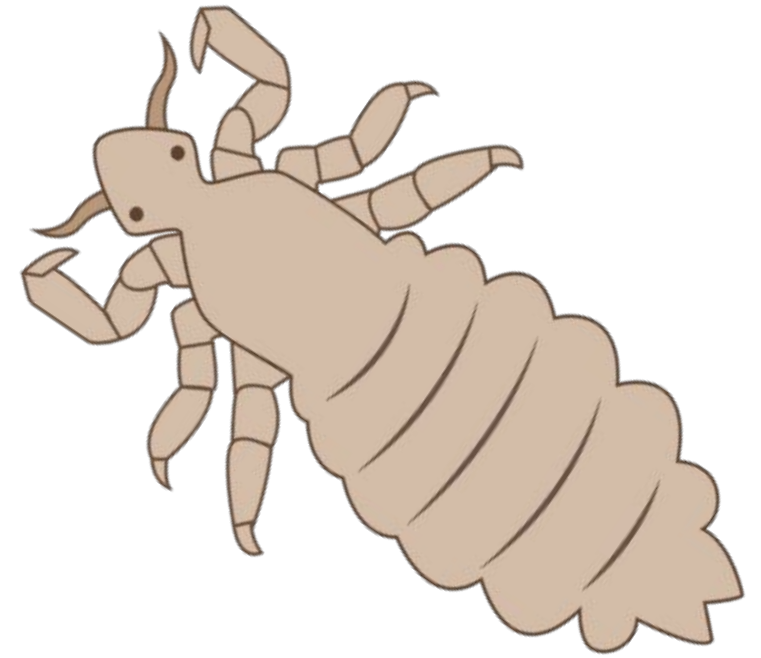


Head Lice Can Happen



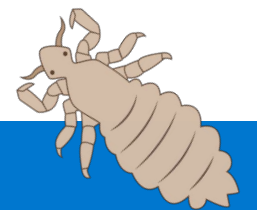


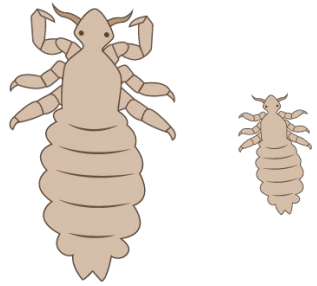
**What are
head lice?**

Head Lice

Small insects that live in hair and feed on blood:

- Tan or grayish-white
- Don't jump or fly
- Can't live very long away from a person's head

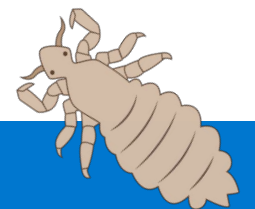


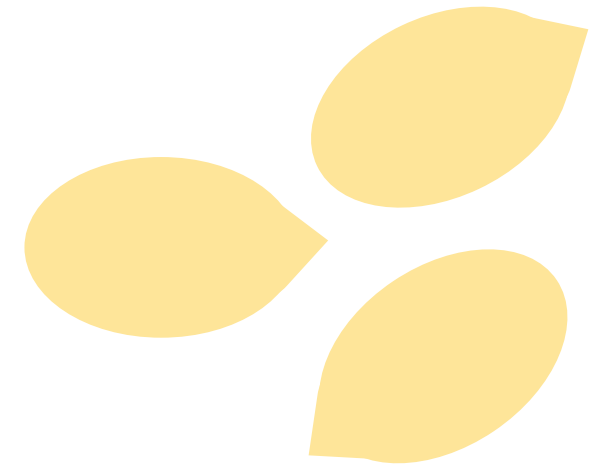


Head lice



- Really small!
- Size of a sesame seed or smaller





What are nits?

Nits = Head Lice Eggs

Glued to hairs on the head, close to the scalp.

- Tiny, teardrop shaped
- Yellow or white in color



Nits may be confused with flakes, dirt or dandruff.
But nits can't be easily brushed off.

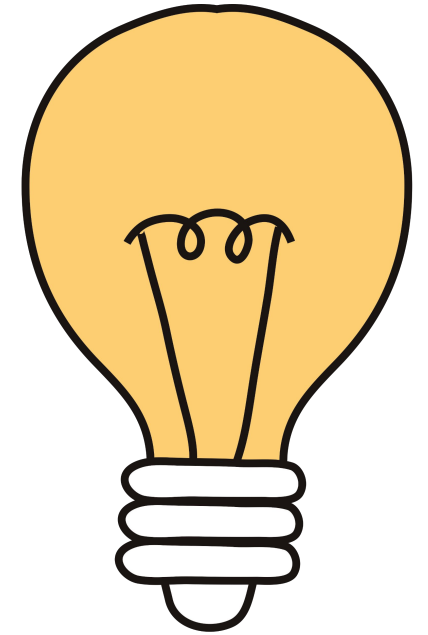


Nits



Dandruff





Understanding Head Lice

Head Lice are Common

- Don't panic! A lot of children get head lice.
- Head lice are an ongoing problem for humans. Fortunately, they can be treated and prevented.



Myth or Fact?

Head lice do not spread disease.



Head lice do not spread disease.

Fact!

Although head lice can be stressful, they do not make people sick.



Myth or Fact?

Head lice only affect people with poor hygiene.



Head lice only affect people with poor hygiene.

Myth!

Having head lice is **not** a sign of being "dirty" or living in an unclean environment.

Freshly washed hair can still be home to head lice.



Myth or Fact?

Only children get head lice.



Only children get head lice.

Myth!

Head lice are most common among school-aged children and their household members, but **anyone** can get head lice.





Head lice are **not** a serious medical condition.
But we understand they are a real nuisance.
Let's walk through tips to identify, treat and
prevent head lice.





How do you get head lice?

Head-to-Head Contact

Head lice mainly spread by direct head-to-head contact with a person who has head lice.



Sharing Personal Items

Occasionally, head lice can spread by sharing personal items like combs, hats, scarves, hair pieces or towels.



Where Head Lice Spread

- More likely at sleepovers, play dates and family gatherings
- **Less likely in a classroom setting**



Settings with **Lower Risk** for Head Lice



School



Pool



Hair Salons



Settings with **Higher Risk** for Head Lice



Sleepover



Family/Friend's House



Sports

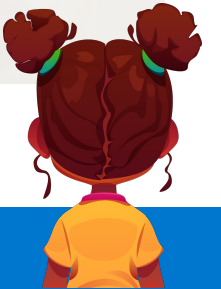


Signs and Symptoms



Common Symptoms

- Itchy head or scalp
- “Tickling” feeling of something moving in the hair
- Irritability or trouble sleeping at night

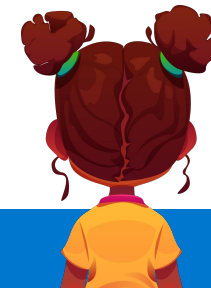


Common Signs

- Lice crawling in the hair
- Nits stuck on the hair, especially near the scalp (cannot be easily brushed away)



If you're not sure, talk to a healthcare provider.



Checking for Head Lice



Who?

Parents and caregivers need to consistently check at home!



Why?

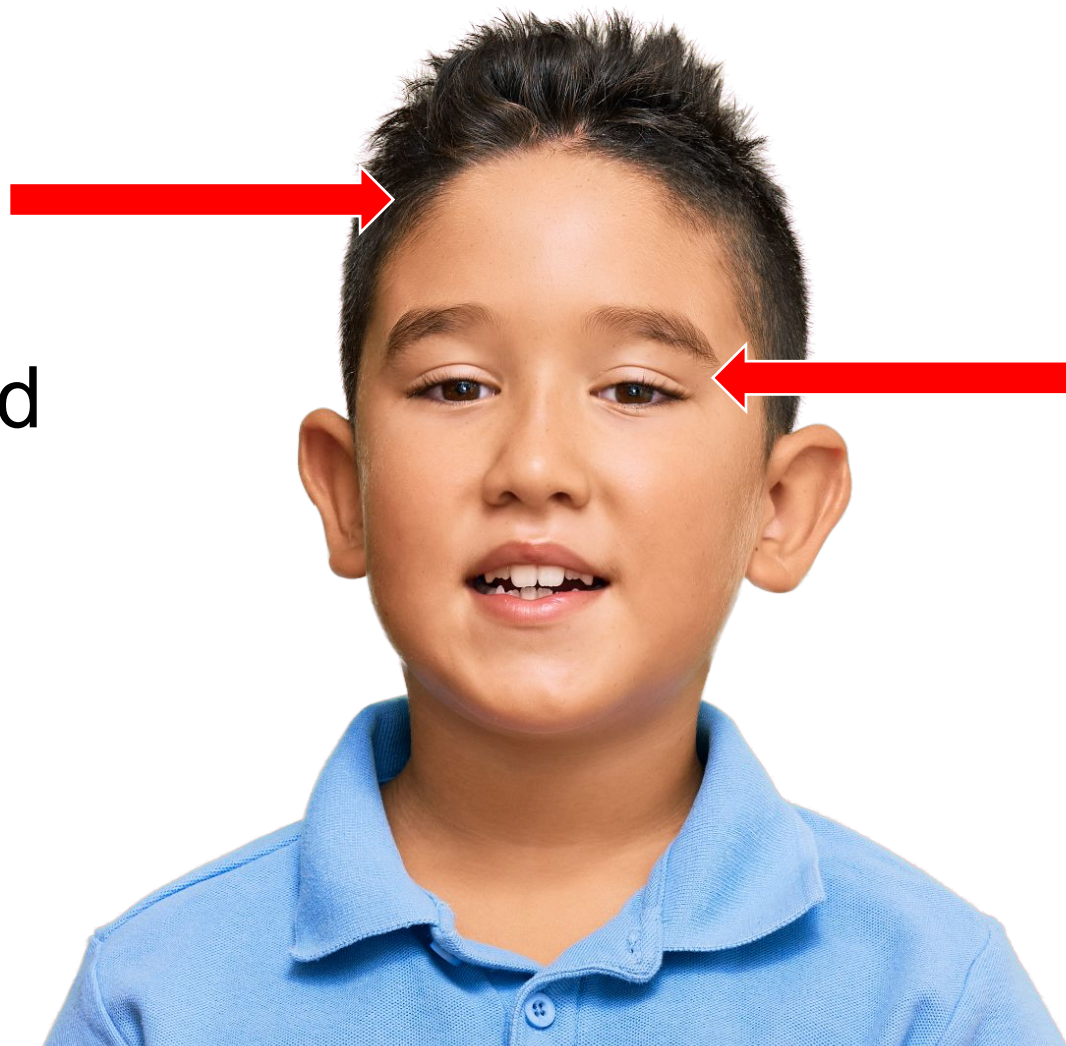
Catch head lice early!

- Treat and control the problem as soon as possible.
- Prevent the spread of head lice to other household members.



Where?

Lice can be found crawling on the scalp and on individual hairs.



Can also be found in eyebrows and eyelashes.



Where?



Nits are glued to hairs close to the scalp, usually behind the ears and near the neckline.



When?



- Check often (once a week)
- Especially check:
 - At the start of the school year
 - After extended breaks and family vacations



How?

- Part the hair in several places so you can see the scalp.
- Use a bright light to look for lice crawling on the scalp.



- Look for nits glued to individual hairs.
- Use a nit comb close to the scalp to check sections of hair.





**Found lice or nits?
Here's what to do.**

Before Treatment

- Check everyone in your household for head lice.
- Find head lice?
 - Don't use conditioner or combination shampoo/conditioner in the hair before treatment.
 - Treat everyone with head lice the same day.



Treatment

Use lice-killing hair products **and** comb for nits.

- Over-the-counter products and prescription treatments are available.



Treatment

- Follow the label directions.
- Rinse hair to remove treatment product, but **do not wash** hair with shampoo or conditioner for 1-2 days.



Alternative Products?

There is no proof that vinegar, mayonnaise, olive oil, tea tree oil or other alternative products work.



Alternative Products?

- Devices that blow heated air (not regular hair blow dryers) may kill both nits and lice.
 - Requires specialized training
 - Can be expensive
- Head lice removal services may be available.



Nit Combing

If you get rid of nits, you get rid of the problem.

- Use a nit comb with long, metal teeth to comb your child's hair (while wet).
- Several brands available at your local pharmacy



Nit Combing Demonstration (Video)



Home Cleaning

- Excessive cleaning is not necessary.
 - Head lice do not survive off the head for very long.
- Pesticide application is not necessary or recommended.



To get rid of lice on certain objects:

Wash clothing, bedding
and other items in hot
water and then dry



Vacuum carpets and
furniture



Head Lice Prevention





Teach children to avoid activities that could spread head lice:

- Avoid head-to-head contact during play
- Avoid sharing clothes and towels
 - Hats, scarves, coats
- Avoid sharing combs, brushes or hair ties



Tips to prevent the spread of lice in the classroom

- Encourage personal space during close activities.
- Discourage sharing of hats, hoodies, hair items, headphones, brushes (wipe headphones between uses).
- Store coats and backpacks separately when possible.
- Routine cleaning is sufficient — lice don't survive long off the scalp.
- Avoid using any shared pillows or blankets in the classroom





Common Questions About Head Lice

Should I shave my kid's head?

Buzzing the hair might not work. Head lice can still live in short hair.

- Consider the impact on your child.
- A drastic hair change might be embarrassing and could cause teasing.



What if treatment didn't work?

- Some treatments kill only lice and not nits. Nits may hatch after treatment, causing a “new” lice problem.
 - Nit combing is important!
- Don't confuse an itchy head (alone) with head lice. Even some treatments can cause an itchy reaction on the scalp.



Possible Reasons for Treatment Not Working

- Instructions for treatment were not followed correctly.
- Hair conditioner was used before treatment.
- Lice may be resistant to some medications.



Possible Reasons for Treatment Not Working



Dandruff

- The problem wasn't head lice – nits can be mistaken for dandruff or drops of hair styling product.
- Your child may have gotten head lice again.



Are some hair types more likely to get head lice than others?

- Head lice may have claws that are better for grasping some hair types, but not others.
- Hair color (natural or dyed) does not affect the chances of getting head lice.



My child's hair is braided or tied up. Can they still get head lice?

Even if your child's hair is tied back, lice can still spread as long as heads are touching.



What if my child hugged, touched, or played with someone who has head lice?



Your child can get lice if they had head-to-head contact with someone who has head lice.



What about sharing helmets or sports equipment?



Always opt for safety vs. concern of head lice.



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)	- Students do <i>not</i> need to leave school immediately; they may finish the day, begin treatment at home that evening, and return once treatment has started. - CDC urges schools to drop “no-nit” policies: most nits are empty shells, rarely transfer, and misidentification is common. Rationale: Head lice are a nuisance rather than a health hazard; absenteeism and stigma outweigh any benefit of exclusion.
National Association of School Nurses (NASN)	“It is the position of the National Association of School Nurses (NASN) that the management of head lice (<i>Pediculus humanus capitis</i>) infestations in school settings should not disrupt the educational process, including but not limited to the elimination of classroom screening, forced absences from school for nits and/or live lice and broad notification that a case of head lice has been found.” - School nurses should lead evidence-based strategies that focus on parent education and individualized follow-up. - Treatment should begin only after at least one live louse is found; the child poses minimal risk of in-school transmission and should stay in class. Rationale: Exclusion drives unnecessary absenteeism, family stress, and over-treatment; confidentiality may be compromised by mass alerts.
American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)	- A child should not be restricted from school attendance because of lice, because head lice have low contagion within classrooms.” “Some schools have had “no-nit” policies under which a child was not allowed to return to school until all nits were removed. However, most researchers agree that no-nit policies should be abandoned” “Head lice screening programs have not been proven to have a significant effect over time on the incidence of head lice in the school setting and are not cost-effective.” “It may be useful to provide information periodically about the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of head lice to the families of all children. Parents should be encouraged to check their children's heads for lice regularly and if the child is symptomatic.” Rationale: Lice cause itching but no illness and have low transfer rates in schools; the larger harm comes from lost instructional time, unnecessary pesticide exposure, and social stigma.

Head Lice Management in Schools: Evidence-Based Guidance

Consensus Across All Three Authorities

- Keep kids learning: allow the student to finish the day and return once treatment has begun.
- Focus on confirmed cases: treat only when live lice are seen; nits alone are not a reason for exclusion.
- Educate, don't alarm: provide parents of affected students with clear comb-out and treatment instructions; avoid blanket notifications.
- Protect privacy and reduce stigma: confidential, individualized communication plus accurate information minimizes worry and absenteeism.

Education and communication

- Provide families, staff and students with accurate, up-to-date information about head lice, including how lice spread, how to identify them, and how to treat them effectively.

Monitoring for symptoms

- Students are assessed by the school nurse **when symptoms are reported or observed** (e.g., scalp itching), rather than routine mass screenings, which are not recommended by national organizations.
- Students with live lice identified at school may remain in class for the day and go home at the end of the day for treatment.

No exclusion for nits

- The school does **not exclude students for the presence of nits alone**, as nits do not indicate active infestation and exclusion has not been shown to reduce spread.

Encouraging routine home checks

- Families are encouraged to perform **regular head checks at home**, even when no cases have been reported.
- Guidance is shared on how to check properly and what to do if lice are found.

Prompt treatment and return to school

- Students may return to school after appropriate treatment has begun.
- Follow-up checks may be recommended, but attendance is prioritized to minimize unnecessary absences.

Environmental best practices

- Emphasize that lice spread through **direct head-to-head contact**.
- Daily cleaning and vacuuming of classrooms and student spaces.

Avoiding head-to-head contact

- Reinforce classroom practices to limit head-to head contact.
- Avoid shared pillows, blankets, hats, accessories.