

We have lice…. Now what….. Lice can be a big nuisance; it is very important to follow the entire process from start to finish to avoid repeating treatment over and over. Lice can be annoying and itchy, but they do not spread germs or illness. Having lice does not mean someone is dirty. Lice are tiny bugs that travel from person to person and can only live on a human head; they do not jump or fly but crawl. The most common way it is spread is head-to-head contact with a person who has lice. Head-to-head contact often happens with sleepovers, whispering into friends' ears, close group work, sharing screens, close contact sports, wrestling, gymnastics, dance, team huddles, sharing sports gear, helmets, etc.

Lice need the warmth of a human body to stay alive and do not live on cats or dogs. Once they fall off a head, they usually die within 24 to 48 hours. To help get rid of any lice that fall off, be sure to wash clothes and bedding in hot water. You can vacuum floors and couches, but focus on the head itself as much as possible.

Store-Bought Treatments: Many store treatments use special medicine to get rid of live lice. The two that are most effective are:

- **Permethrin (Example: Nix):** Put this on damp hair. It is safe for babies 2 months and older.
- **Pyrethrins (Example: RID):** Put this on dry hair. It is for kids 2 years and older. Do not use this if you have a flower allergy (like ragweed).

Important: These do not get rid of the eggs (nits). You **must** do the treatment a second time, usually 7-10 days later, to get any new lice that hatched.

How to Treat

1. **Prep:** Remove any clothes that might get wet. Have clean clothes ready to put on after you are finished.
2. **Wash:** Wash hair with regular shampoo. **Do not** use conditioner, as it stops the medicine from working. Towel-dry until the hair is damp. Or follow directions on the box.
3. **Apply:** Shake the bottle well. Soak the hair and scalp, especially behind the ears and at the neck. (Use two bottles for long hair).
4. **Wait:** Leave the medicine on for the exact time on the box, then rinse with warm water. *If lice move slowly 8–12 hours after treatment, the medicine is working, and you should comb them out; however, if they are still moving fast, call your doctor before retreating.

Removing the Eggs (Nits): Medicine kills the bugs, but it doesn't always kill the eggs (nits). Removing them manually is the only way to guarantee the infestation ends.

- **Tool:** Use a metal nit comb.
- **Trick:** Use a lot of white hair conditioner or "combing gel." This makes the hair slippery so the comb doesn't snag.
- **Process:** Separate the hair into sections. Comb from the skin all the way to the ends. Wipe the comb on a paper towel after every swipe.

Follow-Up Care

- **Check Daily:** Use the metal comb every 2–3 days for the next 3 weeks with conditioner.
- **Retreat:** Follow the box instructions for a second treatment (usually 7–10 days later).
- **Goal:** You are finished when the comb comes out completely clean for several days in a row. If all of the live lice and eggs (nits). To stop the infestation, you must remove **all** lice and eggs. If even one egg is missed, it will hatch and restart the entire cycle.

Lice Clinics OF AMERICA

There is an alternative treatment located in Sun Prairie. Lice Clinics of America offers a fast, FDA-cleared alternative to traditional treatments, using chemical-free heated air to eliminate lice and eggs in just one hour. Their professional staff provides same-day appointments with no follow-up required, and they conveniently accept various payments, including HRA/Flex Spending and Medicaid.

Contact Information:

- **Address:** 600 W. Main Street – Lower Level, Sun Prairie, WI 53590
- **Phone:** (608) 888-2995