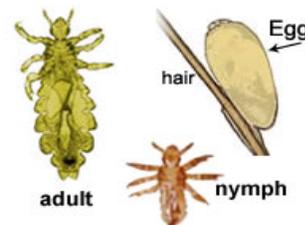


THE FACTS OF LICE

Lice are a highly stigmatized condition that affects millions of people each year.
It is second only to the common cold for school absences.

Head lice are tiny bugs that require blood to survive. They do not have wings or legs capable of jumping; thus, they are incapable of flying or jumping. Lice move extremely quickly from hair to hair, using strong claws that grip the hair follicle tightly. The primary way to get head lice is by **head-to-head contact**, not from "stuff" like hats, hair brushes etc. Research has proven that the risk of getting lice from stuff is very low. However, you can get lice by immediately sharing of these things with an infested person. The most common person to get head lice from is a family member or close personal friend. Lice are species specific, so they are not passed to or from your pets.

The nit (egg) takes approximately 1 week to hatch. Once it hatches, the nymph must feed on blood quickly, feeding on the same blood type for the rest of its life. Lice take approximately 1 week to mature, and then they are capable of reproducing. Once the female is impregnated she will lay 3-5 nits (eggs) twice per day. A louse generally lives about 1 month.



30 Days → What is the Possibility?

| Week | Adults | Eggs | Nymphs |
|--|--------|---------|--------|
| 1 | 1 | 60 | 0 |
| 2 | 1 | 60 | 60 |
| 3 | 61 | 3,660 | 60 |
| 4 | 120 | 7,200 | 3,660 |
| It's at Week 5 that things really start to get scary! The first adult dies after 30 days, but her offspring gives new meaning to the multiply!! | | | |
| 5 | 3,780 | 226,800 | 7,200 |
| Just imagine that 5 or 6 bugs made that initial crossover. Now you do the math! | | | |

HOW TO REMOVE LICE

There are many options to remove lice; some are better than others, and you need to decide what method you believe is best for you and your child. You can purchase an over-the-counter remedy, you can see a physician and get a prescription, you can try homeopathic remedies or you can hire a person who is trained and certified in treating head lice, like Karrell Miller R.N. [www.myLice \(813-767-5327\)](http://www.myLice.com).

Never put a shower cap or bag over your child's head at night when treating for lice, they could suffocate.



Mature lice are relatively easy to kill; however unless you remove all the eggs more lice will hatch and in a couple weeks you will be dealing with the problem again. **You must remove all evidence of lice using a good quality lice comb.** The Terminator comb removes the most live bugs and nits (eggs) in comparison to the other combs on the market. The Licemeister is another great comb and is less harsh on very curly and course hair types.

Combing is the key to getting rid of lice.

Nits (eggs) look different than dandruff (flakes or dead skin). When nits are laid, they are adhered onto the hair shaft with a glue like substance; When you pull a nit off the hair follicle, it will look oval and brown, with what looks like a tail (the tail appearance is from the "glue").



When you are looking for evidence of head lice, look for tiny milky white to brown color dots in the hair, that don't come off easily. Once hatched, the bugs are able to alter their appearance to blend in with the hosts hair color, like chameleons. Also, lice move very quickly in hair, and newly hatched bugs are very tiny and can be easily missed.

To get lice out you need to comb over and over again, removing all the nits (eggs) and bugs. If you are using a lice treatment shampoo, be sure to follow the manufactures directions *very carefully* and wash the product thoroughly out of the hair as directed. Once you are done, dry the hair, and carefully recheck hair in thin layers, starting from the nape of the neck and moving upwards towards the crown; not forgetting the bangs. Then divide the head into 4 sections and go through the hair in ultra thin layers removing any missed nits.

TIPS:

- It is easier to *see* nits on dry hair and easier to *remove* them on wet hair.
- Comb in all directions and be sure that the comb runs along the scalp.

- Re-comb daily the first week; 2-3x the following week and once per week thereafter.

A COMMON SENSE APPROACH TO CLEANING

Understanding how lice feed will help you to understand why you don't need to isolate and disinfect everything. Nevertheless, you may do whatever you feel you need to, in order to feel clean and comfortable again.

Lice feed every 3-4 hours on human blood. In order to ingest the blood the louse must inject their saliva so the blood does not clot. If a louse misses 3 feedings (9-12 hours), it will be so dehydrated that it is unable to create the saliva in order to ingest blood, making it is unable to feed. After 24 hours without blood, lice will die. So, technically if you are really uncomfortable in your home or overwhelmed cleaning, you can simply leave your home for 24 hours.

Remember, lice live on your head, not on your stuff. They can fall off a hair that has been shed or brushed off, but they prefer to stay close to the host unless a more enticing host comes along.

- Change sheets on any bed the infested person might have slept in, in the last 24 hours. Wash and dry in HOT temperatures.
- Comforters can simply be removed from the bed for 24 hours or put into the dryer for 30-45 minutes on high heat.
- Combs, brushes, and hair ties used in the last 24 hours can be put in a Ziploc bag and placed in freezer overnight, or simply isolated for 24 hours.
- Run a light vacuum or use a lint remover on areas where child frequently sits or lays, including floors, furniture, car seat, and other upholstered items or simply throw a sheet over the item for 24 hours.
- If your child sleeps with a stuffed animal or blanket, put them in the hot dryer for 30-45 minutes, or isolate for 24 hours.
- Provide child with clean pajamas and bath towel.
- *"Be a friend and tell a friend!"* Notify your child's school and any close friends who may have been in contact with your child. Remember, it is not just where the child got lice, but whom they gave it to as well. Failing to notify others could put your own child at risk for re-infestation.
- Make head checks as part of your weekly routine. Early detection is the only way to stop head lice from escalating or spreading.



PREVENTION

"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

Here are some tips to reduce your child's chances for re-infestation:

- Keep hair pulled back in a bun or braid, any time they are playing with others.
- *No swinging hair* (as in ponytails).
- If you don't know how to braid, Party n Style (813) 963-5437 offers private braiding lessons
- Shampoo regularly using a mint-based shampoo or lice prevention shampoo.
- Spray hair daily with a mint-based leave-in spray, ie: Nit Free Mint Spray (Amazon)
- Comb before and after: slumber parties, sporting events, school trips etc.
- *Once a week, take a peek!* (Using the lice comb is the easiest way, to find the eggs).
- Comb using a good quality lice comb (Licemeister or Terminator combs (Amazon)
- Look for signs of head lice: itchy, tired, irritable, rash behind neck and ears.

Remember, you're not alone in your experience.

Having head lice is no worse than a bad cold and should be no more embarrassing!