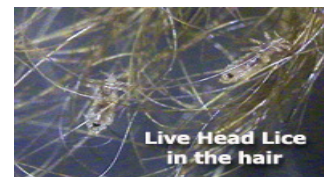
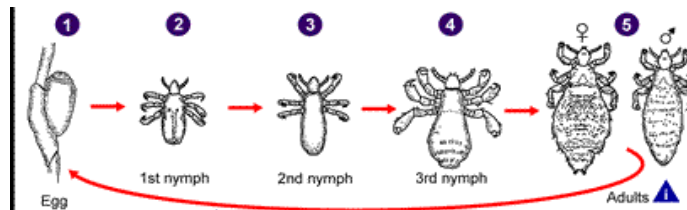




# Head Lice



Head lice affects all socioeconomic levels. Contracting it does not mean you're a "bad parent" or are not "clean". No one person can control head lice. It's a team effort that **starts at home**. So please check your child's hair at least *once every other week and after sleepover's*. Treat **ONLY** if you find lice.

Symptoms of head lice may include a tickling feeling of something moving around or intense itching. They are commonly found in the dark areas of the head like the nape of the neck and behind the ears. They are grayish-white to brown wingless insects that crawl in the scalp. Nits (eggs) are tiny oval yellow or pearl-like drops that strongly attach themselves to the hair shaft. They will usually hatch into live lice within 7-10 days. Dandruff, dirt, hair spray and other items may look like nits, but nits stick on the hair shaft and are harder to flick away.

Live lice are spread by direct contact between persons and items such as: blankets, couches, backpacks, towels, clothing, combs, hairbrushes, coats, scarves, hats, hair bows, pillows and so on. Once lice are found and treated, they will return if **ALL nits are not removed**.

*SOME suggestions (which may or may not work and you may want to ask your own physician for recommendations) are:*

1. Wash the hair with regular shampoo and blow dry it completely. Then apply mayonnaise, petroleum jelly, olive oil or vegetable shortening to the hair. Cover overnight with a shower cap and then thoroughly shampoo out in the morning and over the next few days with regular shampoo. Your child's hair will be greasy. That's ok.
2. If you decide to use medicated shampoo, please consult your physician PRIOR to use. Especially if you are pregnant, your child is young or ill, or if you or your family have asthma or an allergy to plants. DO NOT use medicated products more often than recommended and follow the product instructions completely and carefully.
3. To remove the nits, soak the hair in white vinegar to soften the cement holding the nits to the hair shaft and wrap for 15 minutes. Part the hair in small sections, go slowly, use good lighting and comb through the hair with a nit comb. You can also use your fingernails to remove strongly attached nits by gently pulling them down and off the hair shaft. This **WILL** take several nights in short 30-45 minute sessions to avoid any unnecessary trauma. Throw any nits or lice in the trash and discard the trash immediately. If the hair is frizzy and difficult to comb through, you can try applying a small amount of shampoo to dry hair. Again, pay special attention to the nape of neck and behind the ears, where they like to hide. And remember, you **MUST** remove all the nits or they can hatch again.
4. Clothing, bedding, and towels should be washed in hot water and dried (making sure the water heater temperature is NOT set on energy-saving mode). Store soft toys, pillows or comforters in plastic bags for 35 days. Thoroughly soak brushes and combs in alcohol for one hour. Vacuum furniture, car seats, rugs and sofas. Discard the bag. Medicated house sprays and treating animals is not recommended. Supply a bag for your child to keep in his/her locker to store their belongings until they are lice and nit free.
5. Last, recheck their hair every 2-3 days until they are clear of lice **AND** nits for 2-3 weeks.

I hope this information will be helpful. For further information, please contact your physician, pharmacist or school nurse. Thank you.

Remember: **PREVENTION IS THE KEY!**