

Tips for Using a Nit Comb

After you use a lice killing hair treatment, you must comb through the hair with a special nit comb. These small, metal combs are specially designed for removing lice and nits.



This is a time consuming process, but it is absolutely critical for success. All the nits have to be removed to prevent reinfestation.

You will need:

- a box of tissues and a plastic bag
- a metal nit comb
- a gooseneck lamp so you can direct light
- hair clips
- something to entertain the child

1. Comb through the hair with a regular comb to remove the tangles first. Then, divide the hair into sections, and use the hair clips to pin the hair you aren't working on out of the way. Comb through one section of hair at a time. Start at the nape of the neck and around the ears, and work your way up. Put the nit comb as close to the scalp as you can and pull it slowly through the hair. Slant the comb so the curved side of the teeth is towards the head.
2. Use a tissue to remove any lice, nits, or debris from the comb and put the tissue in the plastic bag.
3. Comb through each section of the hair making sure it's completely free of lice and nits until the entire head has been combed.
4. Clean the combs with an old tooth brush or dental floss, and then soak them in very hot water for 10 minutes.
5. Seal the plastic bag and throw it away.
6. Repeat this process every day for three weeks to make sure all the lice and nits have been removed.

The Rest of the Treatment

Wash the following items in hot water (130 degrees F) and dry on high heat for 30 minutes:

- Sheets
- Pillow cases
- Comforters and blankets
- Pillows
- All clothing worn in the last 48 hours

Soak the following items in very hot water (bring the water to a boil and then remove it from the heat before you add the items) for 10 minutes:

- Nit comb
- Combs
- Brushes
- Other hair items (barrettes, clips, etc)
- Detachable foam pads from bike and sports helmets



Dry clean all items that cannot be washed.

Stuffed animals that can tolerate high heat should be placed in the dryer on high heat for 30 minutes.

Repeated vacuuming is the safest and best way to remove lice and hair with attached nits from furniture, rugs, draperies, car interiors, and car seats.

Fumigation or insecticide sprays are not recommended. They have not been shown to be effective in killing lice and nits and are not worth the expense and health risk.

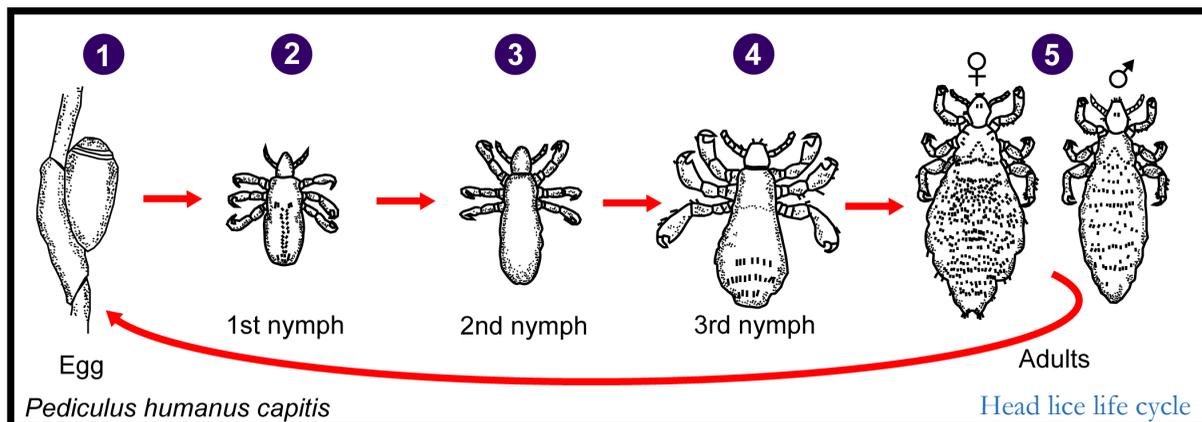
Notify your child's school and all exposed family friends and family members.

Tips to Prevent Reinfestation

1. Tell your child not to have head-to-head contact with other children.
2. After using the nit comb every day for three weeks, keep combing your child's hair with the nit comb once a week, to make sure that all the lice and nits have been removed. Wetting the hair first will stop the lice from moving for a short time and make them easier to see.
3. Teach your child not to share combs, brushes, barrettes, ribbons, head bands, hair ties, helmets, or towels.
4. Make sure you vacuum all upholstery, carpets, drapes, and car interiors regularly during the three week treatment phase.



5. Examine your child's hair and scalp regularly so you can catch an infestation early.





What are Head Lice?

Head lice are tiny wingless insects that live on the head and scalp of people, especially children. They are 1/16 to 1/8 inch in length, which is about the size of a sesame seed, and vary in color from tan to grey/white.

What are Nits?

Nits are lice eggs that are very tiny and difficult to see. They vary in color from yellowish-brown to pearly white and are teardrop shaped.

Remember These Key Points:

Head lice are not a hygiene problem or the result of a dirty house. Anyone can get head lice.

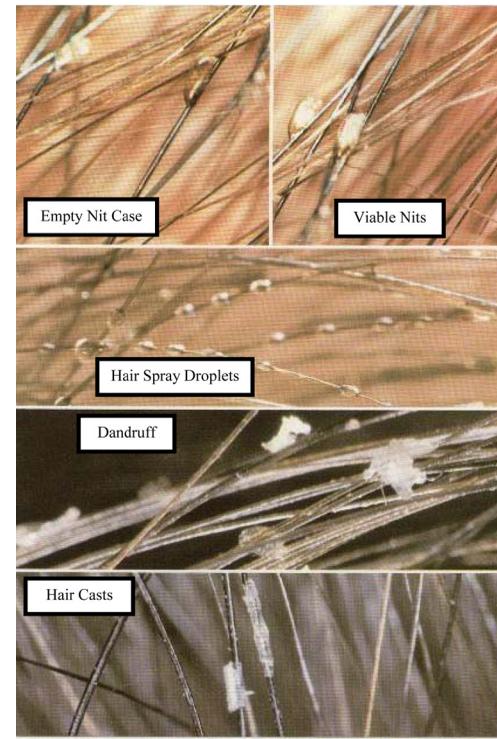
Lice are not able to fly or hop, but they can crawl from head to head when children are in close contact.

Lice require blood to live. Off the scalp, head lice rarely survive beyond two days.

Pets cannot get or spread human head lice.

10 Tips for Using Head Lice Killing Products

1. Products (like Nix, Rid, Pronto, Clear, or A-200) can be purchased at your local drug store. Follow the directions on the package carefully. Ask your doctor if you're using them on someone who is pregnant, breastfeeding, has allergies, asthma, or other pre-existing medical conditions. Don't use these products on children under two years.
2. Treat everyone in the family who has lice at the same time.
3. Don't use combination shampoo/conditioners or cream rinse before you use the product.
4. Use the product over the sink, not in the tub or shower, and make sure you keep the person's eyes covered.
5. Take off all of the person's clothing from the waist up, and make sure you put on clean clothing after you're finished.
6. Cover the person's whole scalp with the product. It's better to put small amounts all over and then spread it out, than it is to put all the product in the middle and try to spread it out from there.
7. Don't overuse the product. Only leave it in for the amount of time it says on the package.
8. Don't wash the person's hair again for two days after the treatment.
9. You can reapply in 7-10 days if the product instructions recommend it.
10. Natural products, like mayonnaise, tea tree oil, olive oil, and white vinegar don't have data to support their use. However, pediatricians say there is no harm in trying them.



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For More Information:

South Central Public Health District website:

www.phd5.idaho.gov

CDC website:

www.cdc.gov

National Pediculosis website:

www.headlice.org



Head Lice

