

# HEAD LICE 101:

- Treatment for head lice includes the use of an OTC (over-the-counter) or prescription medication. Follow the directions closely which often includes a second treatment to be done 7-9 days after the first.
- Retreatment is often needed because medications do not completely kill the eggs (nits).
- **Never** apply pesticides to **any** furniture, clothing or child in an attempt to control head lice. These applications do not help control lice and expose children to needless pesticide risk. Surfaces can be vacuumed or wiped with a damp cloth.
- Head lice are primarily transmitted by direct head-to-head contact. Discourage children from sharing combs, brushes, scarves, hats or headphones, and sharing or personal grooming items to diminish the spread of lice.
- Lice **cannot** jump, hop or fly, but they **can** crawl rapidly.

Source: Center for Disease Control (CDC)  
<http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/prevent.html>

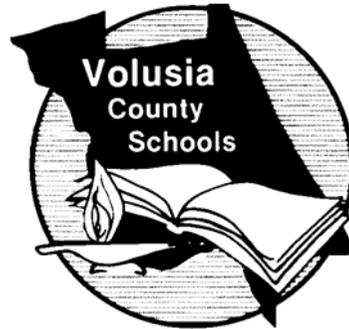


## Sites for Additional Information

**Center for Disease Control**  
<http://www.cdc.gov>

**American Academy of Pediatrics**  
<http://www.healthychildren>

**National Association of School Nurses**  
<http://www.nasn>



### School Board of Volusia County

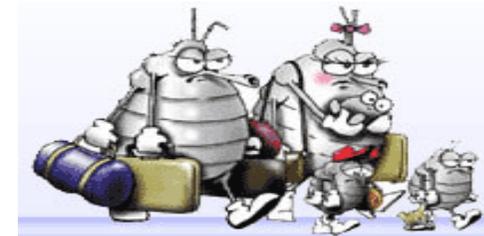
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# Guide for Head Lice Treatment



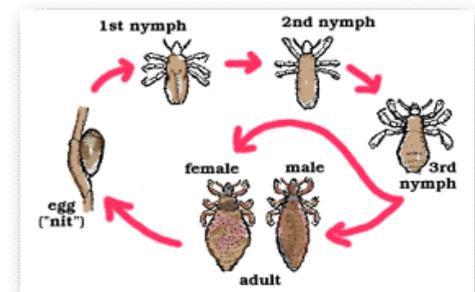
***“Manual removal is the safe alternative and necessary component of any head lice treatment regime.”***

National Pediculosis Association

You can completely control a head lice infestation with manual removal alone. BUT you cannot completely control head lice with head lice shampoo treatment alone. You will need both.

University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences

## Which Came First... the Itchin' or the Egg?



(The Life-Cycle of the Head Louse)

Source: Headlice.org



## THE FACTS

- More than 12 million people, mostly children and school personnel, get head lice every year. Several research groups have identified populations of head lice in the United States that could not be killed with commonly used insecticidal shampoos.
- Lice cannot live longer than 24-48 hours off their host. They cannot reproduce in carpets, pets, furniture, or in trash cans, etc. They dehydrate quickly.
- Do *not* panic! Head lice are *not* an emergency and, in most cases, do not pose a health risk - they are simply an inconvenience that should be dealt with compassionately and calmly.
- Children are often excluded from school even when they are not at risk to transmit head lice. In a Harvard University study, dandruff, fibers, dirt, scabs, skin cells, knotted hair, or other insects are misdiagnosed as head lice 40% of the time! (Harvard School of Public Health)
- If properly treated the child should be able to return to school within 72 hours or less. Children should not miss excessive days from school for head lice infestation.

### Head Louse Photo: licekiller.com



Head lice are small, wingless parasitic insects. They are typically 1/8-1/6 inch long, brownish in color with darker margins. The claws on the end of each of their six legs are well adapted to grasping a hair strand.

### Translucent Nit Photo: Nitcontrol.com



Female head lice glue their grayish-white to brown eggs (nits) securely to hair shafts. (When first laid they are translucent and mirror their surroundings.)

### Nits (Eggs) Photo: Natural-Health-and-wellbeing.com



As the nits mature they turn tan to brown in color before they hatch.



## 10 TIPS FOR MANUAL REMOVAL

1. Work in a well lighted area with a magnifier or reading glasses.
2. Use a hairbrush to remove tangles. Hair conditioner or detangler aids with combing
3. Divide the hair in sections and fasten off the hair that is not being worked on.
4. Use a lice comb (**metal comb**) to detect and remove lice and nits.
5. Go through hair sections from the scalp to the end of the hair. Nits are usually found close to the scalp.
6. Dip the comb in a cup of hot soapy water or use tape to remove any lice, nits or debris from the comb.
7. Sift through the same section of hair and look for attached nits and live lice.
8. Move onto the next section until entire scalp and all hair has been checked.
9. Screen (with the lice comb) every day for 10 days and regularly thereafter.
10. If additional nits (at least 3-5 per day) are discovered, another manual search is recommended with the lice comb.

***Head lice have been around since the beginning of time; they are resilient and require diligence to break the cycle.***