

Head Lice: The Process of Getting Rid of It

1. Treat person with live head lice or nits (eggs) within $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of scalp.
 - a. Follow treatment instructions on package
 - b. Avoid swimming for at least 2 days after treatment*
 - c. Follow regular hair washing instructions on head lice treatment package-some say not to wash hair with regular shampoos for 1- or 2-days following treatment and or not to use crème rinse or conditioner on the hair for a few days before or after treatment. Shampoo only kills LIVE LICE and does not get rid of nits.
 - d. Use a nit comb or your fingernails or a scissors to remove nits within $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of scalp.
2. Consider treatment for anyone who shares a bed with the person infested with head lice.
3. Check heads of all household and close contacts for live head lice or nits within $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of scalp. Treat person(s) found to have live head lice or nits within $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of scalp.
4. Launder hats, scarves, pillowcases, bedding, clothing, and towels worn or used by the infested person in the 2-day period just before treatment is started.
 - a. Machine wash and dry using hot water and hot air cycles
 - b. Items not able to be laundered should be dry-cleaned or sealed in a plastic bag for two weeks/14 days.
 - c. Soak hairbrushes, combs, and hair ties in hot soapy water and allow to air dry. Do not place in boiling water.
5. Do not share hats, grooming aids and towels that come in contact with the hair of a person infested with head lice.
6. Vacuum furniture, floors, mattresses, and inside of the car.
7. Set a reminder or mark your calendar when to retreat according to treatment product package or holistic treatment instructions.
8. Retreat hair of the person per product or method used*.
 - a. Remove nits, after treatment checking the hair and combing with a nit comb to remove nits and lice every 1-2 days may decrease the chance of self-reinfestation. Continue to check for 2-3 weeks to be sure all lice and nits are gone.
9. Monitor the hair of each child on an ongoing basis, every couple of days.
10. Notify school office of treatment. Provide a note or phone call with date of treatment and type of treatment used.
11. Student presents to office for a head check upon return to school after treatment *Per package instructions.

Some photos to help you.



Actual size of three lice forms compared to a penny. (CDC Photo)



Illustration of egg on a hair shaft. (CDC Photo)



Nymph form. (CDC Photo)



Adult louse. (CDC Photo)

Treatment Options

FDA approved for the treatment of head lice in the United States.

Product	Alternative names	Type of product	How to obtain
Permethrin 1% lotion	Nix or generics	Lotion	Over the counter
Pyrethrin + Piperonyl butoxide shampoo	Rid or generics	Shampoo	Over the counter
Ivermectin 0.5% lotion	Sklice	Lotion	Over the counter
Malathion 0.5% lotion	Ovide	Lotion	Prescription
Spinosad 0.9% suspension	Natroba	Suspension	Prescription
Ivermectin 3 mg tablet	Stromectol	Tablet	Prescription

Category	Agents
Botanical agents for killing or repelling lice	Essential oils, Cinnamomum, Cocos, Curcuma, Elletaria, Eucalyptus, Eugenia, Geranium, Heliantus, Juniperus, Lavandula, Lippia, Litsea, Melaleuca, Melia, Mentha, Monarda, Myrcianthes, Origanum, Pimpinella, Rosmarinus, Salvia, Schinus, Tagetes, tea tree, Zingiberaceae. Repellent: citronella
Occlusive agents	Home remedies: petrolatum, mayonnaise, melted butter or margarine, olive oil Dimethicone Cetaphil cleanser
Desiccants	Natrum muriaticum (Vamousse) AirAllé device (formerly Lousebuster) Isopropyl myristate (Resultz)

Manual removal	Physical nit combing Electronic nit combs Vinegar-based products to loosen nits Shaving the hair off
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Alternative agents reported for head lice treatment (not FDA approved or recommended).

References

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