

HEAD LICE TREATMENT & NIT REMOVAL PLAN FOR PARENTS

When one family member has head lice it is important to check all members of the household and close contacts. Treat only the infested family members. Follow the plan below:

1. The recommended first line treatment is an FDA approved, over the counter, lice killing product (pediculicide) for humans. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends the use of a product that contains permethrin.
2. Before applying treatment, cover the child's eyes with a towel or washcloth. Do not treat in the shower or bathtub. Instruct the child to lean over the sink and only apply the product to the head area. This prevents absorption through other skin areas.
3. Apply lice product according to the label instructions. If your child has extra-long or thick hair, you may need to use a second bottle to assure complete coverage.
4. Wash the hair according to label instructions. Once applied, allow the lice killing product to continue working by using only regular shampoo for two weeks after treatment because cream rinses and conditioning shampoos coat the hair and protect lice from the lice killing product.
5. Following treatment, use a fine-toothed metal comb to remove lice and nits from the hair shaft. Metal lice combs (i.e., Leominster, etc.) are preferred because they have finer teeth for nit *removal*, are less likely to break or bend when combing through the hair and can be boiled or sterilized. Any remaining nits need to be removed by sliding the nit down the hair shaft with your fingernails.
6. Recheck the hair daily for lice or new nits laid close to the scalp. Continue to comb out nits with the fine-toothed metal comb. Removing all nits will help to prevent a new infestation.
7. Retreat according to the instructions on the lice-killing product (pediculicide).
8. Continue to check all treated and untreated persons in the same household for two to three weeks even after they appear to be nit and lice free.

Alternative Treatments

The effectiveness of non-pesticide treatments such as Hair Clean 123, Not Nice to Lice, olive oil, mayonnaise and petroleum jelly has not been proven through research.

ALERT

The use of kerosene, gasoline, paint thinners, turpentine, flea products, or industrial/garden pesticides is dangerous to your child.

Cleaning the Environment

1. To live, adult lice need to feed on blood. Lice die within one to two days when away from the blood source. Therefore, excessive cleaning measures are not necessary; however, routine cleaning is recommended as follows: the same day as the head treatment, clothing, and bed linen should be washed in hot water and dried in a dryer; carpets and upholstered furniture need to be vacuumed thoroughly; pillows and stuffed animals should go into a hot dryer for at least ten minutes or be placed in a sealed plastic bag for two weeks and combs, brushes, and hair accessories should be soaked in hot water (at least 130 degrees) for at least ten minutes.
2. Spraying of furniture, rugs, carpets, car seats, and pets with a pesticide is not recommended.