

# Getting Rid of Lice

## Nit-Picking

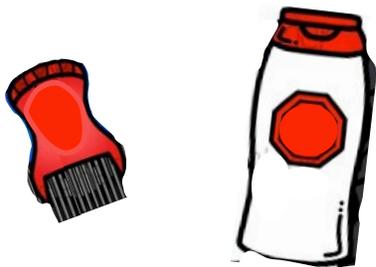
With almost every treatment you do, you will have to comb through wet hair with a fine tooth comb. The nits will be near the shaft of the hair and they will appear to be glued in place.

## Over the Counter Treatments

You can purchase shampoos, such as Rid, Nix, Lice Shield, etc., that are applied to dry hair, left on for 10 minutes and then rinsed off. Separate hair into several smaller sections, keeping them separate with clips. Work in an area with good lighting so you can see clearly and be sure to frequently rinse the comb with running hot water. The general rule for these treatments is "Treat Lice Twice."

## Home Remedies

Nearly all home remedies rely on smothering or suffocating lice and require you to coat hair with the oils first, let sit for 30 minutes, separate and section hair. After combing through the hair, shampoo and rinse twice, then thoroughly clean the towel and comb. Generally this process is repeated daily for a week.

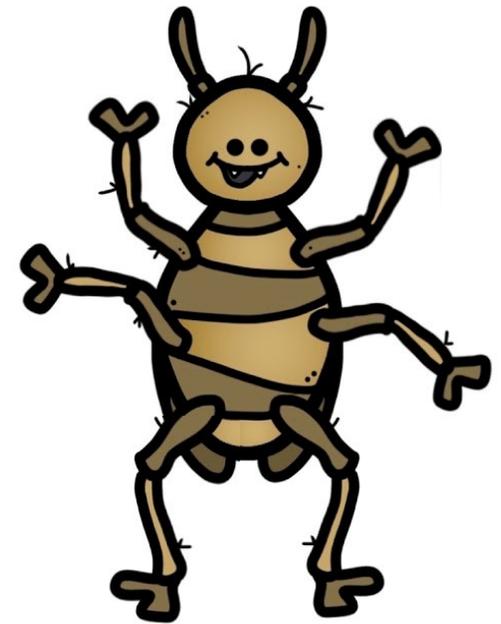


# Removing Lice From Your Home:

1. Vacuum your car interior thoroughly and wash children's car seat covers.
2. Wash all bedding and recently used towels using hot water and dry the items using the highest temperature possible to kill the lice.
3. Put all pillows in the dryer on the hottest setting for at least 20 minutes.
4. Thoroughly vacuum all mattresses and couches.
5. Remove all stuffed animals and other cloth items including backpacks, soft toys, and other items that you cannot wash from your home, and seal them in a plastic bag or garbage bag for at least two weeks.
6. Wash all clothes worn by the infested person in the last three to four days in hot water, and dry on the hottest setting.
7. Vacuum all carpets thoroughly and mop all wood floors.
8. Boil hair brushes to kill the lice or throw them away and buy new ones.

Removing lice from your home is a long, arduous process; it can take days. You must be thorough because if you leave some lice behind, re-infestation can occur, which leads to even more work for you and your family.

# Head Lice Education Booklet



**Room 508  
Riverside Elementary School**

# Signs Of Lice

## Scratching

One of the most obvious signs of lice is scratching. The itch does not come from the lice itself, but the saliva from the lice. Scratching may not start at first, but children may complain of movement or of tickling in their hair.

## A Rash or Sores

Depending on the severity of the infestation and your child's reaction to the lice, you may be able to see a rash or signs of scratching.



# What Is Lice?

The head louse is a tiny, wingless parasitic insect that lives among human hairs and feeds on tiny amounts of blood drawn from the scalp. It sounds worse than it really is. Lice (the plural of louse) are a very common problem, especially for kids. They are contagious, annoying, and sometimes tough to get rid of.

But while they're frustrating to deal with, lice aren't dangerous. They don't spread disease, although their bites can make a child's scalp itchy and irritated, and scratching can lead to infection.

It's best to treat head lice quickly once they're found because they can spread easily from person to person.

# How Does Lice Spread?

Head lice spreads by direct head-to-head contact with someone who has a lice. The louse crawls along the hair and simply crawls onto another person's head via a strand of hair. Nits or lice eggs cannot be spread from head-to-head. Lice eggs are laid on the hair shaft with a cement-like glue which keeps them securely on the hair until the bug hatches from the egg.

Head lice spreads within families if you sit closely or sleep together. Lice spreads at schools as well because young children typically have close contact with one another either with desks set side-by-side or during normal play and school activities. Though head lice do not hop, jump, or fly, they do crawl very quickly.

Another way of contracting lice is through items like hairbrushes, hair accessories, helmets, and headwear. They should not be shared. It's even possible for a louse to be left behind on a movie theatre chair or train seat headrest. Note that this is NOT the typical way to contract lice but it is possible.

Activities like sleepovers are an example of where children might have this kind of direct head-to-head contact over a period of time, exposing them to the possibility of contracting head lice.

Being in the same room with someone who has a case of head lice does NOT mean you will catch a case.



# Preventing Head Lice

There are a few methods of head lice prevention that might reduce the risk.

- Keep long hair tied up in ponytails or even better, braids or a bun.
- Use a little hairspray to keep stray hairs contained.
- Use tea tree oil either by adding a few drops to your regular shampoo, or by making a spritz by adding a few drops to water in a spray bottle. Tea tree oil can be very drying, so only use a few drops (as directed).



Parents should be alert to the common sign of head lice – scratching the head. Watch for children who are scratching or who might even wake up in the night saying that their head is itchy. Pay attention to kids who are visiting and watch to see if they are scratching their scalps as this could indicate a case of lice.

