



HOW TO CHECK A HEAD FOR LICE



✓ **ASK AND LOOK for signs of itching, like scratching the head.** If a spot on the head is itching, be sure to check that spot for lice and nits.

✓ **CHECK the back of the neck for signs of redness and scratches.** Not everyone with head lice will have itching. If you do not see lice or nits in these areas, part the hair into sections and keep looking.



✓ **SEARCH until the whole head has been checked.** Start at the top. Section off small amounts of hair. Clip the section that has been checked with a hair clip or bobby pin. Keep checking the head until all of the hair has been checked or until you see a louse or nit.

✓ **IF you see lice or nits, remove them and decide what kind of treatment to use.** If no louse is found, but nits are found and no treatment has been done in the past seven days, a treatment may be applied and the nit(s) removed. If live lice and/or nits have been found and treated in the past seven days with a pediculicide, remove lice and/or nits and repeat treatment no sooner than seven days from last treatment.

✓ **EACH person in the household should be checked.** Lice are more common in children between five and twelve, lice can and do live on infants, adolescents, middle-agers and older persons.



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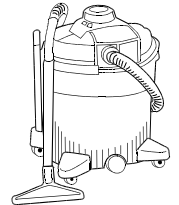


MECHANICAL OR MANUAL REMOVAL OF HEAD LICE



Mechanical or manual removal of head lice is the preferred method of removal.

- ❖ Live lice can be removed from the head by vacuuming. A special attachment is made for removing lice and fleas. Pet supply stores may carry the vacuum cleaner attachments*. Vacuuming is reported to be the most comfortable and fastest way to remove lice.



- ❖ Manual removal means using a tool, comb or other device, including hands to remove lice. You can purchase special lice combs at most local drug stores. Pet stores also carry combs that will remove lice, though they are marketed for fleas.

- ❖ Head lice can be removed from the head by grabbing and pulling them between the thumb and index finger. Tape can be used to take lice out of hair also. Lice cannot live very long off of the head.



- ❖ To remove the lice, part the hair into sections, select a section and part the hair, removing lice as you move through the sections. Clip or pin each section when inspection and removal has been completed.
- ❖ **TIP:** If a warm comb, pleasantly hot to the hand, is passed through the hair, lice become excited, leave their usual places among the bases of the hairs, and are more easily combed out.

Your Local Kirby Dealer
Ask for Scalp Massager
This one may only fit on a Kirby Appliance – an
adapter may be required
Cost is about \$1 - \$1.50

Noah's Ark
Product: Angel Vac
Price varies – Less than \$50.00
3702 Franklin, Flint, MI 48506
(810) 239-1117 for an appointment



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HOW TO CHECK A HEAD FOR NITS



Female lice lay eggs which they attach individually to a hair shaft. The egg is inside of a case called a nit. Nits are most often attached near the scalp to a single hair shaft. Nits are best described as opal or whitish in color, the center darkens as the louse matures. The louse matures in seven to ten days, leaving the nit or case still firmly attached to the hair shaft, now appearing transparent. Nits are easier to see in dark hair, and are a challenge to see in gold-tone or mixed hair color.



CHECK the hair at the bottom of the head near the top of the neck and around the ears. Natural light or indoor lighting with at least a 60 watt bulb is recommended. A magnifying glass may be helpful.



Nits are more likely to be seen in the hair than lice, although both are visible to the unaided eye for persons with normal vision. Nits may be found anywhere on a hair shaft. Those found on the end of the hair shaft farthest from the scalp are most likely to be empty cases.



Nits are present only when lice have also been present. Only lice deposit nits on a hair shaft; no other insect puts nits on human hair.



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GUIDE TO MECHANICAL OR MANUAL REMOVAL OF NITS



- ❖ Part the hair into four sections. Select a section to work on. Start at the top of the head in the section chosen.

- ❖ With one hand, lift a one-inch strand of hair. Place the teeth of the special comb as close to the scalp as possible and always comb away from the scalp.

- ❖ Using clips, pin back each strand of hair after combing out the lice and nits. Clean the comb as you go. Wipe the lice and nits from the comb with a tissue and dispose of the tissue in a sealed bag to prevent reinfestation.

- ❖ When finished combing, recheck the entire head for nits, and repeat combing if necessary.



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ALTERNATIVE NON TOXIC TREATMENTS FOR HEAD LICE



- ❖ Coconut Oil Shampoo, Coconut Oil Soap and Olive Oil Shampoo
Common or commercial names include:
Kirk's Castile Soap (found in laundry section of grocery store)

Directions:

- Shampoo hair in (comfortably) hot water
- Rinse
- Shampoo hair
- Tie a towel around lathered hair and leave it on for 15 – 20 minutes
- Remove towel
hair will be moist with soap. Leave it this way. Do not rinse soap out. If hair dries during the combing process, wet it again with water.
- Remove nits with nit comb or fingernails
- Rinse hair with (comfortably) hot water
(Crème rinse may be applied at this time or you may choose to shampoo hair with your regular shampoo, followed by a crème rinse.)
- Continue to shampoo, check, and remove nits every 2-3 days for 3 weeks

- ❖ Vaseline Petroleum Jelly or Mayonnaise (regular not light or fat free)

Directions:

- Cover entire head and hair with Vaseline Petroleum Jelly or Mayonnaise
- Wrap head with towel
- Leave on head overnight or eight hours
- Shampoo hair (you may need to shampoo more than once to remove this product)
Note: Dishwashing detergents are not suitable for use on hair and should not be used in this manner. The scalp can be damaged.
- Remove nits with comb or fingernails

**CHECK HEADS EVERY TWO OR THREE DAYS FOR THREE WEEKS BEFORE
DECLARING VICTORY**



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HOW TO TREAT HEAD LICE USING A PEDICULICIDE



RID®, **PRONTO®**, **CLEAR®**
and other pyrethrum based products

Prepare the child or adult by talking about the process. Start by removing upper body clothing, replacing it with a towel around the shoulders. A dry washcloth over the eyes will help keep the product out of the eyes. Products should not be inhaled or swallowed. Products are not to be used near the eyes and should not come in contact with other mucous membrane surfaces, such as the nose or mouth. Using the shower is not recommended. Using a sink is preferred, to keep body exposure to the pesticide minimal.

1. Apply the lice killing agent to **dry, freshly shampooed** hair.
2. Leave on exactly ten minutes. Start timing when all of the product has been applied.
3. Add warm water and lather.
4. Rinse thoroughly and towel dry.
5. Comb hair to remove tangles.
6. Part hair into sections. Start at the top of the section chosen and place the teeth of the special nit removal or pet flea comb as close to the scalp as possible and comb away from the scalp.
7. Clean comb after each stroke. Wipe lice and nits from the comb with a tissue, placing it in a bag, close the bag and place in trash.
8. When finished combing, recheck the entire head for nits and repeat combing if necessary.
9. Check hair every two to three days for live lice and nits. Manually remove all live lice and nits found following treatment and for seven days. Do not retreat sooner than seven days.
10. Repeat treatment, following the same steps, in seven to ten days.
11. If the problem persists following the second treatment and cleaning of personal and household items, check with your health care professional. Do not repeat treatment.



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HOW TO TREAT HEAD LICE USING A PEDICULICIDE



NIX®

A permethrin based pediculicide

1. Wash hair with **regular** shampoo, one that does not include a crème rinse or conditioner (often named as a plus product, or it may say “combination” or “2 in 1” in the name or on the label).
2. Rinse shampoo out of hair and towel dry so hair is damp, not wet.
3. Shake the bottle of NIX® well. Apply enough NIX® to soak the hair and cover the scalp. Be sure to apply NIX® behind the ears and at the base of the neck. You may need to apply the entire bottle of NIX®.
4. Leave NIX® on the hair for ten minutes, but **NO** longer. Start timing as soon as all the NIX® has been applied.
5. Rinse with water.
6. Towel dry hair.
7. You may choose to comb out the tangles before sectioning the hair and combing for lice and nit removal.
8. Part the hair into four sections. Select a section. Start at the top of the head in the section chosen.
9. With one hand, lift a one-inch strand of hair. Place the teeth of the special comb as close to the scalp as possible and comb away from the scalp.
10. Using clips, pin back each strand of hair after combing out the lice and nits. Clean the comb as you go. Wipe the lice and nits from the comb with a tissue and dispose of the tissue in a sealed bag to prevent reinfestation.
11. When finished combing, recheck the entire head for nits, and repeat combing if necessary.
12. Do not wash the hair for two days, then use a mild baby shampoo.
13. Recheck the head every two or three days for the next two weeks. If lice or more nits are found remove them mechanically or manually.



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14. Retreat in 7 days only if live lice or nits are present. You may need to return to your health care provider for additional NIX®. If lice or nits are present following a second treatment do not repeat. Check with your health care provider.

NIX® is not to be used on infants less than two months of age. Manual removal of lice and nits is recommended. Pregnant women and nursing mothers should check with their health care provider before using NIX® on themselves or before putting NIX® on another person. Persons doing multiple treatments are advised to use gloves when doing treatments. Advise asthmatics to check with their health care provider before using NIX®. Advise anyone doing treatment or receiving treatment that has a history of allergic reaction to flowers or weeds or has had a previous reaction to NIX® to check with their health care provider before using NIX®.



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ATTENTION TO THE ENVIRONMENT

Where time and energy are limited, concentrate on inspection and combing rather than on extra washing of clothing and bedding.



Lice and nits can survive for a short time away from the safety of the warm head, so it is important to give close attention to those places in the environment they may have come to rest.

DO NOT USE SPRAYS OR BUG BOMBS. Sprays and bombs may unnecessarily expose your family to dangerous chemicals.

Vacuuming is recommended for removal of lice and hairs with egg cases (nits) attached.

Background Information:

Lice need warmth and food to survive. They have both when they are on a human head. They do not leave their food and heat source unless something disturbs their ideal environment, they are injured, or are moved by force. Lice that are easily dislodged from their hosts are usually feeble and are unlikely to infest a new host. Lice do not live in the carpets, furniture, bedding or on animals. If they are found in these places, it is incidental that they are there. Unlike fleas, lice do not live in the carpet. Lice only live on human heads. If they are on anything else, they are not getting the warmth, humidity and food they need to live. Animals do not spread head lice. Lice do not live on animals, so animals do not need lice treatment.

If, however, a louse is not on a human head, it may be able to crawl onto a human head, it is possible (unlikely, but possible) it could re-locate.

- ❖ Vacuuming the area and objects most likely to come in contact with a head might keep lice from spreading. Carpets, headrests and favorite stuffed toys should be considered for vacuuming.

Vacuum:

- Mattresses
- Carpets and rugs
- Upholstered furniture
- Furry and fuzzy toys
- Car or truck, paying particular attention to head rests

- ❖ Washing bedding in water at least 130° F. and drying in a dryer on the hot cycle for 20 minutes or hanging laundry in sunshine is recommended. Those items that cannot be washed may be dry-cleaned, ironed with a hot iron or placed in a plastic bag and closed for at least two weeks. They can also be bagged and put in freezing temperatures for twenty-four hours. Any live lice or nits that might hatch will die during this time.
- ❖ After cleaning (an old toothbrush works well for this), soak combs and brushes in hot water (130° F), maintaining the temperature for 20 minutes or soak in rubbing alcohol or Lysol for 10 minutes or wrap them in plastic and throw them out.



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COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



Q: The school called to say my child has head lice. What do I do now?

A: Read and ask questions about lice and how to get rid of them. First, check the head so you know what it is you are trying to get rid of. It is important that you understand. If you have questions, start with the person who contacted you. That person should be able to give you some guidance about school policy. Your health care provider or school nurse would be a reliable source of information. Pharmacists know a lot about lice products, and are usually willing to spend time with their customers discussing the details of treatment and how to use products. Be sure to check every person in the household. Even though you treat for lice it's no guarantee they are gone forever. They can be caught again and again.

Q: How did my child get head lice?

A: Head lice are passed from person to person, usually by close contact. Since we are more likely to have close contact with another person as a child, children are more likely to come in contact with someone who already has head lice. The person with head lice may be another child, or could be an adult (that may be unaware they have lice).

Q: My child was sent home from school because of head lice. What will the school require on re-entry?

A: Most schools will require the head to be lice and nit free. It is not unusual for a person at the school to inspect the child's head before the child is allowed to return to the classroom. If you have questions about re-entry, you are encouraged to speak with either the teacher, administrator or the person responsible for re-entry at your child's school.

Q: I did shampoo the head with lice shampoo and afterwards I still found live lice. Why?

A: Pediculicides are absorbed by the louse. When enough has been absorbed to paralyze or over-stimulate the nervous system the louse will die. In the meantime, the louse may survive, but be a bit slower than before treatment. The recommendation is to remove all live lice, check the head every two or three days, removing all live lice and nits, and retreat in seven to ten days. Retreating sooner than seven to ten days is not recommended. Retreating sooner than recommended will not get rid of the lice any faster or better.



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Q: How do I get the nits out?

A: Nits can be removed by fingernails or by using fine-toothed combs. Special combs are available for purchase from manufacturers, are often included with products or can be purchased at pharmacies. Many stores that sell pet supplies sell a comb for flea removal. Although lice and fleas are not the same, they are about the same size and the comb used for removal of fleas from pets will also remove nits from human hair. Flea combs are less expensive than head lice combs are.

Q: I can't afford expensive head lice treatments. Are home remedies a good idea?

A: Before you try any home remedies ask your health care professional, pharmacist or local health department for information and advice. Never use lice spray or pet shampoo, kerosene or any chemical products that have not been approved for use on a human to kill lice or nits. Lice sprays are insecticides meant for objects, not people. Your local health department or school nurse will be able to provide you with information.

Q: How do I know that the treatment I choose will not harm my child?

A: Ask your health care professional or pharmacist about all the risks and benefits of treatment, read the information provided with the product, search the internet (but be aware that all the information is not backed by reliable research. Some statements are not research based information).

Q: What is the school going to do to guarantee me that my child, upon returning to school, will not get head lice again?

A: Most schools have a program in place to notify parents of situations involving head lice in the school setting. Many times it is not possible to know where the lice came from. Lice do not survive off of the human head, so no amount of cleaning and bombing at school will eradicate lice from the head. Schools generally have regular cleaning procedures and schedules.

Q: Is Lindane® (Kwell) dangerous to use on my child? My doctor prescribed it.

A: Lindane® is deemed safe to use by the Federal Drug Administration (FDA), the part of the federal government that tests and determines if a product is safe to use. The FDA has determined Lindane® is not unsafe when used as prescribed. One of the problems that occurs with Lindane® (and other products also) is that it is not always used as the manufacturer directed. One of the unfortunate finds is that many people seem to have the philosophy, if a little bit is good, then a lot is better or if one treatment kills a louse and I see another before seven days then it must of OK to use it again (before the seven day time span). It is effective in killing live lice, but can be harmful if used more often than directed. OTC pediculicides have been shown to act more quickly than Lindane to kill lice, so consider the risks and benefits of Lindane and other pediculicides or alternative treatments.



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