



Head lice – let's get rid of them!



Head lice are annoying and you can get them faster than you can get rid of them again. To keep head lice infestations within the family as short and infrequent as possible, we are providing you with some helpful information and recommendations.

Tips

Examine your child if head lice occur in the environment.

If your child has head lice, inform those people who have had close contact with your child.

Tie up long hair.

Not all children scratch themselves more when they have head lice.

How to find head lice?

Head lice are difficult to detect with the bare eye. Freshly hatched they are 1 to 2 mm long, adult head lice are approx. 3 mm long. They are found only in the hair on the head and often at the temples, behind the ears and in the neck. Head lice are very mobile and difficult to find in dry hair. Therefore, it is recommended to wet the hair to search for head lice and to apply a generous amount of conditioner.

To untangle the hair, it should be combed well with a comb or brush. Then comb the hair strand by strand from the hairline to the tips with a louse comb (available in the pharmacy). After each combing, wipe the louse comb on a white paper (e.g. household paper) to see head lice and eggs.

What should be done when live head lice are found?

Immediately **inform** the school, kindergarten, nursery school and parents of children with whom your child likes to play if you discover head lice on your child. This will help to prevent further spread.

Get yourself an **anti-head lice remedy** and treat according to the instructions for use. The choice can be discussed with the child and youth health service, the paediatrician or a pharmacist. In clinical trials, the following (physically effective) products have proven to be particularly effective and free of side effects: Hedrin (Express) and Paranix spray. Long and thick hair needs larger amounts of lice shampoo: too little lice shampoo is a common reason why treatment is not successful.

The common anti-head lice remedies are effective against live lice, but not necessarily against non-hatched lice in eggs. Therefore, two treatments at an interval of 7–9 days are recommended to kill freshly hatched lice.

There is no risk of infecting other people during this time as freshly hatched lice cannot yet reproduce. If you comb your hair with the lice comb twice a week for an additional month, you can verify the success of the treatment and limit reinfection.

Tips

Only treat your child with a lice shampoo if you see live head lice.

If you find live lice on your child, check all family members.

Do not spend time and effort on cleaning duvet covers, clothes, toys, etc. Transmission through such objects is not possible!

Place combs and hair utensils in hot (60 °C) soap solution for 10 minutes to clean.

Only found nits or louse eggs: what to do?

Be careful and comb your hair twice a week for 2 weeks with a louse comb as described above. If you find living head lice, treat them immediately. If no live head lice were found during the check, no further action is required. The nits (empty egg shells) are then a purely cosmetic "problem": unlike dandruff, nits stick to the hair and are not so easy to remove. If your child is louse-free, you should continue to check him or her regularly for head lice over the next few weeks.

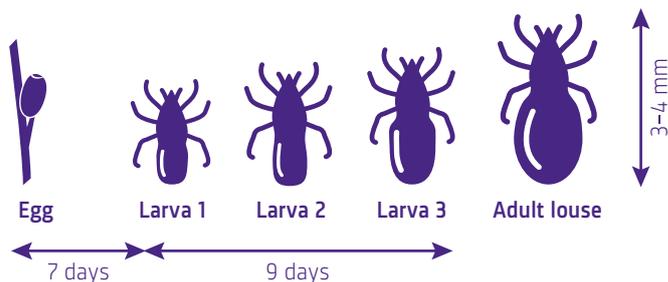
We have discovered head lice again, what am I doing wrong?

Your child may have been infected again, or not all the lice were removed during the last treatment. If, despite treatment, you still feel that you cannot get the lice problem under control, you can contact us for a free consultation.

Head lice – good to know!

Head lice only survive on the human head and feed on human blood. Females have a lifespan of 4 to 5 weeks and from the 9th day of life onwards lay sand-grain sized eggs which are attached to the hair with a glue-like substance near the scalp. New lice hatch from the eggs after 10 days at the latest.

Unfortunately, head lice cannot be eradicated and humans must learn to live with them. Head lice infestation is more likely to occur in regions with a high population density. The transmission occurs through direct hair-to-hair contact, e.g. when children put their heads together while playing. Head lice infestation therefore has nothing to do with hygiene, but is a sign of close social contact. Head lice can neither jump, swim nor fly. They are also not transmitted via objects or animals.



Further information

► www.lausinfo.ch