

OPTION B: WET COMBING (A non-chemical way to find and eliminate head lice).

Remove the Head Lice

Wet combing is based on the life cycle of head lice. It focuses on removing the live head lice and does not require removing the nits from the head. Combing treatments are done every 3 – 4 days over a two-week period. This breaks the life cycle of head lice by removing them before they are fully-grown and able to reproduce.

This option is cheap and safe but is time consuming and requires that the steps below be followed carefully and completely. Talk to your Community Health Nurse if you require further information.

STEPS TO FOLLOW

DO	REMEMBER
1. <u>Wash</u> hair with ordinary shampoo and rinse.	1. Note: On average, a wet combing session takes about ½ hour per person.
2. <u>Apply</u> at least ½ cup of conditioner (any brand) to completely wet all of the hair. Do not rinse out the conditioner.	2. Untangle hair with a regular wide tooth comb. Wet conditioner will immobilize the lice.
3. <u>Comb</u> sections of hair using a “nit” comb (metal works best). Divide hair into small sections. Firmly draw the comb from the scalp to the end of the hair. After each stroke, rinse the comb in a sink or bowl of warm water, and wipe dry. Continue section by section until the entire head is done. Make sure hair stays wet during combing with conditioner.	3. Metal nit combs are available at your local pharmacy. If the comb tugs the hair, use more conditioner.
4. <u>Rinse</u> hair. Leave hair dripping wet. Repeat Step 3 combing <u>without conditioner</u> , until no lice are found.	4. Check the comb and your fingernails for head lice (you don't want to put any lice back in the hair).
5. <u>Repeat</u> Step 1 – 4 every 3 – 4 days for two weeks.	5. Use a wide-tooth comb to untangle and then use the fine tooth metal nit comb again.
6. <u>If live head lice or new nits are found after two weeks of wet combing, try Option A or talk to your Community Health Nurse.</u>	6. Wet combing breaks the life cycle of head lice by removing them before they are full grown and able to reproduce.

DAYS TO WET COMB

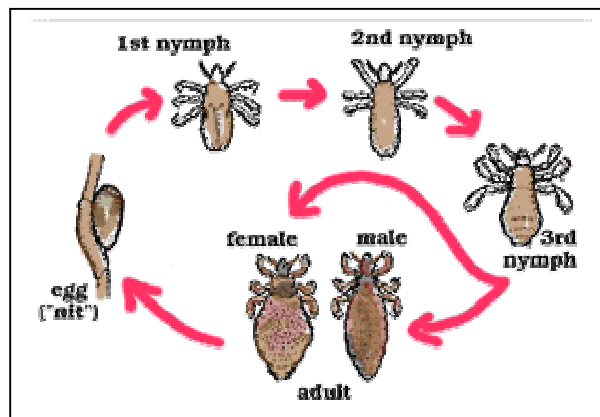
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HEAD LICE FACTS

Head lice are an ongoing problem in today's society. They are not a major public health concern in that they do not spread disease. They become a community concern because of the nuisance and discomfort surrounding infestations and spread.

- Head lice are tiny insects about the size of a sesame seed.
- Head lice live only on a person's head.
- Anyone who has hair can get head lice.
- Head lice do not jump or fly.
- Head lice can move quickly on dry hair, so they are difficult to see.
- Head lice bites can make the scalp itchy.

Biology and Life Cycle of Head Lice



- Head lice do not cause disease
- Adult head lice lay about 10 eggs (called nits) every day. These nits are stuck to the hair near the scalp.
- It takes 7-10 days for the nits to hatch.
- It takes 6-10 days for lice to become adult. During that time, it stays on the head, but does not lay.
- You can find nits anywhere in the head especially behind the ears or on the back of the neck.
- Nits can vary from white to brown and are about 1/3 the size of a sesame seed.
- You can't get rid of nits by brushing, or with a hair dryer.
- After the head lice hatch, the shell of the nit stays stuck to the hair. If it is more than 12 mm (1/2 inch) away from the scalp, it is probably empty.
- You can get head lice by touching heads with someone who has head lice, or by sharing combs, brushes and hats.
- Head lice are common where children play or work closely together.