

Tips to Treat a Case of Head Lice

Getting rid of head lice is a time-consuming process, but it's not impossible! Fortunately, a number of nonprescription treatments are available, and your pharmacist or doctor can offer advice on selecting a product. After using the medication, be sure to remove every last nit, because even one nit can cause a reinfestation.

1. Get tough – treat the head with a head lice-killing product

- Over-the-counter treatments, usually in creme rinse or shampoo form, are available at the pharmacy.
- Use only one treatment product at a time, and follow the directions carefully and completely.
- Never use the treatment product near the eyes.
- Home remedies, such as mayonnaise and petroleum jelly, are not scientifically proven to work.
- Never use unapproved chemicals such as pet shampoos, gasoline, or kerosene.

2. Get picky – remove head lice and nits

The Reasons

- Treatments kill head lice, but they do not remove the nits.
- Unlike dandruff or hairspray, nits cannot be removed by blowing or brushing the hair.
- Removal of nits is absolutely necessary for proper head lice management.

The Methods

After treatment, and while hair is still damp:

- Part the hair into four sections. Select a section to work on. Start at the top of the head in the section you have picked.
- With one hand, lift a 1-inch strand of hair. Get the teeth of the comb as close to the scalp as possible and always comb away from the head.
*If you pick nits out with your hands, you may want to wear rubber gloves, or wash hands carefully after nit removal on each child. Lice can live for a short time under your fingernails, and could be spread to you or to your other children.
- Using clips, pin back each strand of hair after you have combed out the nits. Clean the comb as you go. Wipe the 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.
- Check daily for head lice or nits you may have missed.

3. Make a clean sweep

- Clean your home thoroughly, as indicated on the other side of this sheet.

4. Be on guard – check head again in seven days

- Use products in accordance with directions for use.
- If live lice are found in seven days, another treatment with the head lice-killing product is necessary.
- Missing even one tiny nit can result in reinfestation.