

The problem will not go away

DID YOU:

- follow the manufacturer's instructions?
- apply it correctly?
- use enough lotion or liquid?
- leave it on for the correct amount of time?
- use a second bottle 7 days after the first?
- check all your close family and inform friends?
- check adults as well as children

***If you would like further information on head lice,
contact:***

*Your School Nurse or Health Visitor,
A Community Pharmacist,
The Community Infection Prevention and Control Nurse*

or

<http://www.hpa.org.uk/topics>

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The Health Protection Agency North West,
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and

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HPA North West



Head Lice

INFORMATION LEAFLET

The facts about head lice

- Head Lice are small parasites that live very close to the scalp.
- Nits are the empty egg cases which stick to the hair.
- Anybody can get head lice – adults and children.
- Head lice do not care if the hair is dirty or clean, short or long.
- Most infections are caught from close family and friends in the home and community.
- Head lice can walk from one head to another, if the heads are pressed together for some time. They do not fly, jump or swim.
- Regular hair care may help to spot lice at an early stage.
- The best way to stop infection is for families to check their heads regularly using detection combing.

How to detect head lice

You will need a **detector comb**. These are available from your pharmacy.

1. Wash the hair well and towel dry.
2. Ensure that there is **good lighting** – daylight is best.
3. First, comb the hair with an ordinary comb.
4. With the detector comb slowly draw the comb from the roots towards the ends of the hair (applying a small quantity of hair conditioner may assist with this).
5. Check the teeth of the comb carefully for lice.
6. Repeat steps (4) and (5), working your way around the whole head from the top of the scalp to the ends of the hair. This should take 10 to 15 minutes – be methodical, do not try to do too much hair at once.
6. If you find lice, or something which you are unsure about, stick it on to a piece of paper with clear sticky tape and take it to your GP or local pharmacist.

The most effective way to detect & prevent head lice infection is by regular (weekly) detection combing.

Insecticidal liquids or lotions should **NEVER** be used to try to **PREVENT** infection, or be used '**just in case**'.

How to treat head lice

DO NOT TREAT UNLESS YOU ARE SURE YOU HAVE
FOUND

A LIVING, MOVING LOUSE

Ask your GP or pharmacist which head louse lotion or liquid to use. Do NOT use head louse shampoo.

In a well ventilated room....

1. Follow the manufacturer's directions for the product advised.
2. Leave on the hair as directed. Then, wash and rinse hair as normal.
3. Ensure a second treatment seven days later is applied following the initial treatment.
4. Check the head two days after the second application. If you still find living, moving lice ask your pharmacist, GP or school nurse for advice.

Contact tracing

Head lice may affect other members of the family, so please always consider others who may also require treatment.