

Frequently Asked Questions about Head Lice

How do we get rid of head lice when our family is affected?

The best attack is to check every one in the family at the same time to be sure all affected individuals receive treatment.

If you chose to use lice treatment products, use them only as directed. These are strong insecticides and should not be misused.

The eggs are difficult to see and remove if you are unfamiliar with them. They are the size of a sesame seed and contain live lice larvae. When the nit hatches, a new louse is now on the move and eating. Their heat and food source is on the scalp. Within one week they are mature enough to reproduce and the cycle continues.

Vacuuming is also a very important factor. If the louse has crawled onto the bed or furniture, it can stay alive without a food source for 24 hours. You must vacuum all of the upholstery in the home, the beds, carpets, and car before anyone else sits on them to prevent spread in the household.

Laundry is also important. Any clothes that have been worn or touched by clothes of the affected person must be washed in hot water and dried in a hot dryer to kill active lice you can put all of the laundry in trash bags, seal them tight, store them outside of the house and wash them when you get to them.

When can my child return to school after having lice?

They can return when they are bug free (which is the recommendation of the CDC, Harvard School of Public Health, American Academy of Pediatrics, National Association of School Nurses, and Oregon Health Department). Please come with your student to school upon their return and one of the trained school staff will check them prior to their return to the classroom. We will check again on Day 7 and Day 14.

Do I need to notify the school when my child gets head lice?

Yes. That is the only way we can help you to stop the problem quickly and to check any other contacts when appropriate to do so.

Why does it seem like some kids never get rid of head lice when they get it?

Usually it is because a step in the treatment plan has failed or a step is missed, especially nit removal.

Is there help out there to get rid of this problem?

There is a lot of information on the CDC website <http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/treatment.html>
Spanish <http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/es/tratamiento.html>

Your child's health care provider can offer assistance.

You may also call your school nurse, Karen Pyeatt BSN, RN, NCSN at 503. 673-7021 or by email pyeatk@wlwv.k12.or.us.