

HEAD LICE

Lice are tiny, wingless, parasitic insects that feed on human blood. Lice are easily spread – especially by schoolchildren – through close personal contact and by sharing belongings. Head lice are found on your scalp. They're easiest to see at the nape of the neck and over the ears.

COMMON SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF LICE INCLUDE:

- Intense itching on the scalp.
- Tickling feeling from movement of hair.
- Lice on your scalp. Adult lice may be about the size of a sesame seed or slightly larger.
- Lice eggs (nits) on hair shafts. Nits may be difficult to see because they're very tiny. They're easiest to spot around the ears and the nape of the neck. Nits can be mistaken for dandruff, but unlike dandruff, they can't be easily brushed out of hair.
- Sores on the scalp, neck and shoulders. Scratching can lead to small red bumps that can sometimes get infected with bacteria.

Lice feed on human blood and can infest the human head, body and pubic area. The female louse produces a sticky substance that firmly attaches each egg to the base of a hair shaft. Eggs hatch in six to nine days.

You can get lice by coming into contact with either lice or their eggs. Lice can't jump or fly. They spread through:

- Head-to-head or body-to-body contact. This may occur as children or family members play or interact closely.
- Proximity of stored belongings. Storing infested clothing in closets, lockers or on side-by-side hooks at school, or storing personal items such as pillows, blankets, combs and stuffed toys in proximity at home can permit lice to spread.
- Items shared among friends or family members. These may include clothing, headphones, brushes, combs, hair decorations, towels, blankets, pillows and stuffed toys.
- Contact with contaminated furniture. Lying on a bed or sitting in overstuffed, cloth-covered furniture recently used by someone with lice can spread them. Lice can live for one to two days off the body.

Contact your child's doctor to receive guidance on treatment.